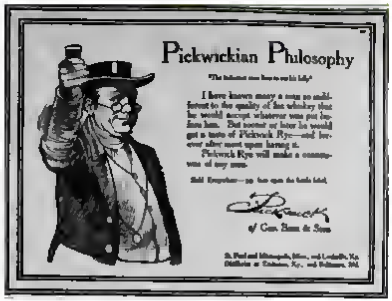
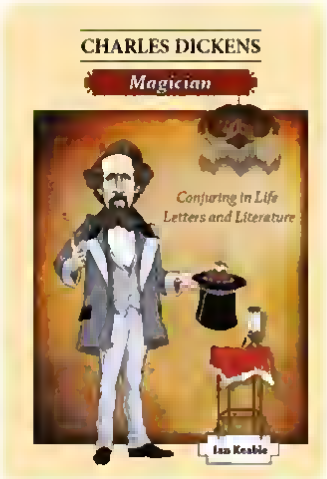
Death and Mr Pickwick

Chronicles - Volume 8

by Stephen Jarvis



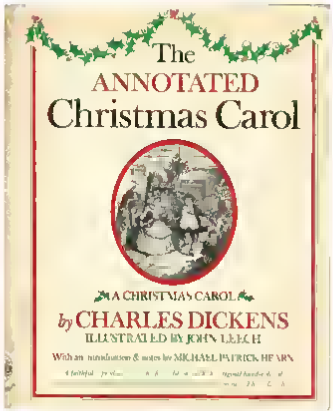
February 18



- Today, I am delighted to welcome Ian Keable, author of the book *Charles Dickens Magician: Conjuring in Life, Letters and Literature*, as a guest poster on the *Death and Mr Pickwick* facebook page. So, here is the first of Ian's five posts.

- Forster and Dickens
- "Stephen, in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, imagines a scene between Dickens and John Forster plotting the means of deliberately underplaying Seymour's role in the creation of *Pickwick*.
'There are ways it can be done,' said Forster, 'so that even if you were contradicted you would have a reply. I know how to make the scheme congenial to you. Think of it as an audacious conjuring trick, if you like.'
- Dickens replies: 'But a good magician's secrets are not found out. I am uneasy.'
- The chances are that in real life Dickens and Forster (shown as a young man in the portrait) would have had many a conversation about conjuring.

- "This is because we know from a letter sent to his good friend Cornelius Felton (shown left), whom he had met earlier that year on his trip to America, that Dickens purchased his first set of magic props with the help of Forster. The relevant extract is as follows
- 'The actuary of the national debt couldn't calculate the number of children who are coming here on Twelfth Night, in honour of Charlie's birthday, for which occasion I have provided a magic lantern and diverse other tremendous engines of that nature. But the best of it is that Forster and I have purchased between us the entire stock in trade of a conjurer, the practice and display whereof is entrusted to me.'
- The letter was written on 31st December, 1842 and is the first indication of Dickens's interest in conjuring. He would do his first show six days later on 6th January, 1843. We know that it was a success because, a month later, he is writing to the man who acted as his assistant, Clarkford Stansfield, about 'exciting reports of the conjurations we performed on Twelfth Night'.



- "Dickens seems to have used a number of assistants in his conjuring shows, depending on which of his friends was around at the time. In 1849, at one of his final recorded conjuring shows, it was John Leech, yet another brilliant illustrator for Dickens with *A Christmas Carol*. And we know that Forster was also inveigled into the role when Dickens performed at a birthday party for the wife of the actor William Macready in December 1843. Jane Carlyle, who attended the party, wrote:
- 'Dickens and Forster above all exerted themselves till the perspiration was pouring down and they seemed drunk with their efforts! Only think of that excellent Dickens playing the conjuror for one whole hour—the best conjuror I ever saw—(and I have paid money to see several)—and Forster acting as his servant!'"

February 18

- Peter Stadlera now posts about a food for the sweet-toothed which is mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick*...and the perfect place to store it!
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about almond toffees or 'hardbake'. Hardbake is a sweetmeat made of boiled sugar or treacle with blanched almonds.

- "And I've found a US company selling those toffees under the name 'Tiny Tim', a reference to the character in Dickens's *A Christmos Corol*.

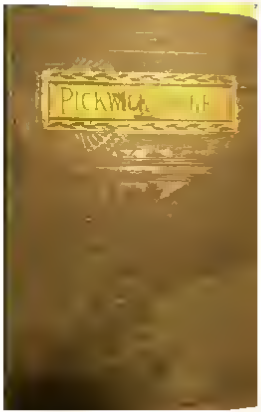
- "If you are fond of those toffees you can store them in this old candy tin entitled 'The Pickwick Coach arriving at the White Hart Inn' Pictured on the top of the lid is a colorful scene from *The Pickwick Papers*. The tin is from 'Thorne's The World's Premier Toffee Leeds, England.'

"On the sides there are some really nice old-fashioned street scenes in green and red."

February 19

- Here is the second in the series of guest posts by Ian Keable.
- Conjuring References
- "When writing my book *Charles Dickens Magician: Conjuring in Life, Letters and Literature* (2014), I read all his novels to discover if there were any references to conjuring in them. *Pickwick Papers* unfortunately was barren in this respect. Given that Dickens didn't start getting seriously interested in magic until 1842, this might seem unsurprising. But the most quoted conjuring citation appears in *Oliver Twist* (Fagin says 'Some conjurers say that number three is the magic number, and some say number seven. It's neither, my friend, neither. It's number one.'), whilst in *The Old Curiosity Shop* is the only depiction by Dickens of a fictional conjurer (a street entertainer called Sweet William who 'earned his living by showing tricks upon the cards') And both of these books also pre-date 1842.

- "Being pedantic - and that of course is the raison d'être for those of us who are reading these type of posts - the above references are not strictly of a conjuring nature. By that I mean they could have been written by somebody who had no inside knowledge of magic tricks. I was more interested in whether Dickens came up with an allusion that only a person who had dabbled in actual magic performing could have written.
- There are a few that fit this stringent criteria. The best is from *Bleak House* where the lawyer, Mr Tulkinghorn, is described as having 'the honour of acting as legal adviser of the Dedlocks, and has as many cast-iron boxes in his office with that name outside, as if the present baronet were the coin of the conjuror's trick, and were constantly being juggled through the whole set.' This is a reference to a trick that Dickens himself performed, known as the Coin in Nest of Boxes (Shown in the photo.) Essentially a coin vanishes and is found in the innermost box of seven boxes, all inside one another akin to a Russian Doll.



- 'Devoid as it might be of any conjuring related extracts, from my perspective *Pickwick Papers* more than makes up for it in comedic vignettes. So as a comedy magician, at least it fulfils half of my onstage persona. One thing I discovered when reading Dickens though, is that it is very hard to pin down a single sentence or phrase that is amusing. His humour comes about from setting up scenes, characters and situations and gradually evolves over many lines of writing.

- My own particular style of comedy tends towards the sarcastic, 'taking the mickey' out of audience members. My favourite exchange of this type in any of Dickens's writings does indeed come from *Pickwick Papers*, where Mr Gunter scores a decisive hit over Mr Noddy, not once but twice.

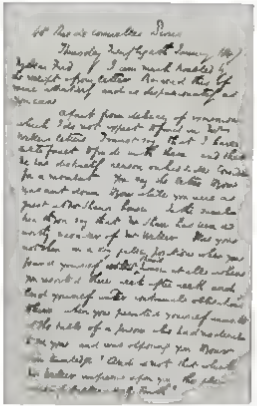
- "'I request that you'll favour me with your card, Sir,' said Mr Noddy.
'I'll do nothing of the kind, Sir,' replied Mr. Gunter.
'Why not, Sir?' inquired Mr. Noddy.
'Because you'll stick it up over your chimney piece, and delude your visitors into the false belief that a gentleman has been to see you, Sir,' replied Mr. Gunter.
'Sir, a friend of mine shall wait on you in the morning,' said Mr. Noddy.
'Sir, I'm very much obliged to you for the caution, and I'll leave particular directions with the servant to lock up the spoons,' replied Mr. Gunter.'

- A hilarious double whammy!"

February 19

- Here is a great post by Peter Stadlera on Dickens s brother Fred. It is quite a coincidence that Fred married a woman whose surname was WELLER. The name appeared at various moments in Dickens s life. And yet, I don't think it is a very common name - I have never personally known a Weller, and the only Weller I can immediately think of is Paul Weller, the musician. Things like this made me think that a slight supernatural element should be included in *Death and Mr Pickwick* - I wanted some supernatural element anyway (and that appears overtly in the *Der Freischutz* section), to echo the supernatural component of *The Pickwick Papers*, but I wanted to suggest that there were forces of 'destiny' at work, in the lives of Seymour and Dickens. The magpie which appears at the start of *Death and Mr Pickwick* represents those forces.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Boz's brother Fred (1820-1868). Frederick was the son of John Dickens and Elizabeth Barrow and Charles Dickens' younger brother. He lived with Charles when he moved to Furnival's Inn in 1834.



- "In 1845 the 25 year-old Fred Dickens fell in love with 15 year-old Anna Weller, a match that Charles disapproved of as he did not trust the girl (please have a look at the first page of Dickens's letter to his brother). This caused a rift between the two brothers. Fred married Anna on 30 December 1848 despite Charles's misgivings, but in 1858 the couple applied for a judicial separation on the grounds of adultery. Anna was granted alimony, which Fred Dickens refused to pay, leaving the country. On his return in 1862 he was arrested and imprisoned for debt. Fred spent the last years of his life as an alcoholic. After the separation from his wife he moved to Darlington in the North-East of England, where he lived in the home of a retired innkeeper whom he had known in London. Frederick Dickens died at the age of 48 from asphyxia caused by a burst abscess on his lung. He is buried in Darlington, within the grounds of the town's West Cemetery.

- "When Fred died, Charles lamented his brother's 'wasted life.' Tiny Tim from *A Christmos Corol* was originally called Little Fred.

- "Incidentally, in yesterday's post I mentioned Tiny Tim's candies. The manufacturer of these, with reference to *A Christmas Carol*, donates ten percent of all profits directly to 'families with injured children, broken homes, and the ever increasing unemployed who have one or more children.'"

February 20

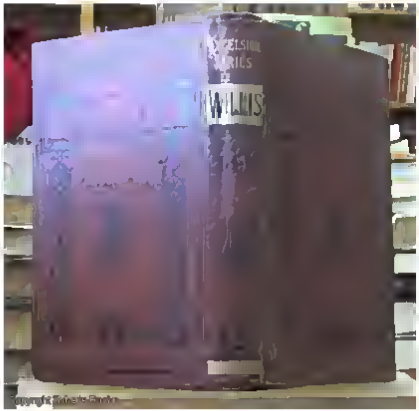
- Here is the third in the series of guest posts by Ian Keable.
- Forensic Analysis
- "Part of the appeal of *Death and Mr Pickwick* to me was Stephen's forensic unravelling of the question of who had actually created Mr Pickwick. I always find it interesting how one biographer is happy to accept the word of a predecessor without going back to the original provenance. It is only by doing this that you can uncover the actual truth.
- Part of the reason for writing my book *Charles Dickens Magician: Conjuring in Life, Letters and Literature* was to correct all the anomalies that had been perpetuated by various writers on Dickens as a conjurer - both magic historians and Dickensians. One of my favourite books of recent years about Dickens in this respect was Simon Callow's *Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the Magic* (2012), which managed to get practically everything wrong.

- "This is because Callow relied almost exclusively on one source for his information: Heathcote Williams' *What Larks! Charles Dickens Conjuror* (1995). The fact that Williams (shown left) was a fellow actor perhaps influenced Callow's choice of source.
- So Callow quotes extensively from an article about magic that he claimed was written by Dickens (it wasn't); he misidentifies the mind-reading conjurer whom Dickens saw in Boulogne in 1854 (the conjuror was actually Alfred de Caston, shown in the photo on the next page); he gets confused with his dates as to when Dickens started conjuring; he states that Dickens 'performed large-scale illusions' (he only did small apparatus tricks); and he claims that Dickens always took on the guise of an Indian conjurer - when actually he also performed as a Chinese magician and as Mephistopheles.

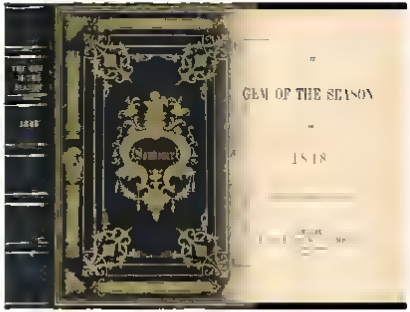
- "All relatively inconsequential points, it could be argued, in the overall scheme of things. But given that our information on Dickens as a conjurer is very limited, it all adds up to creating the wrong impression of his short-lived conjuring career
- I suspect, however, that my book will fail to register with future Dickensian writers, and the myths will continue to be perpetuated. Let's face it: who are future historians going to rely on for their point of reference on Dickens as a conjurer? One by renowned actor and biographical writer Simon Callow? Or an obscure, self-published book by a complete unknown?
- I hope the same fate isn't suffered by *Death and Mr Pickwick*. Who will subsequent researchers believe when it comes to the true inventor of *Pickwick*? A novel written by a non-historian? Or the myriad of books penned by Dickensian experts? I wouldn't want to place money on it."

February 20

- Peter Stadlera now posts about an American writer, Nathaniel Parker Willis, who met Dickens, and who provided a very different view of the man from the traditional one: the Dickens that Willis met, just prior to *Pickwick*, was an obsequious man, not the man of iron-hard will of the traditional accounts. Of course, the obsequious Dickens would very likely follow Seymour's lead, and so what Willis says is very important in the debate about the origin of *Pickwick*. But what is also interesting is the response of Dickensians to Willis. JWT Ley, the Dickensian of the 1920s whom I have written about before, accused Willis of lying, and said that Willis wasn't even in Europe at the time he claimed to have met Dickens. This is a fabrication by Ley. When I pointed this out on the online Dickensian forum DICKNS-L, what I said was dismissed as "garbage", the discussion was immediately closed down, and I was informed that I would be given no right of reply



- Peter Stallera: "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the American writer Nathaniel Parker Willis and wonder who this man was. Nathaniel Parker Willis (1806 1867), editor, essayist, journalist, novelist, playwright, poet and travel writer was born second in a family of nine children in Maine and schooled in Boston. He attended Yale and travelled extensively in Europe. His sister was Fanny Fern. In 1831 he left Boston to join the editorial staff of the *New York Mirror* as a travelling correspondent discoursing on matters of taste and fashion. Willis expressed admiration for the work of Edgar Allan Poe and even claimed an acquaintance with him. In October 1844 Poe worked on the staff of *The Evening Mirror*, which Willis edited along with George Pope Morris as a sub editor, writing and securing material for the miscellaneous columns, and publishing *The Raven* in January 1845. Along with James R. Lowell and Poe's chosen literary executor, Rufus Griswold, Willis edited *The Works of the late Edgar Allan Poe, with a memoir by Rufus Wilmot Griswold and notices of his life and genius*, by N. P. Willis and J. R. Lowell (1850). Willis also provided an account of the death of Poe to accompany Richard Henry Stoddard's and James R. Lowell's introduction to *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe*.



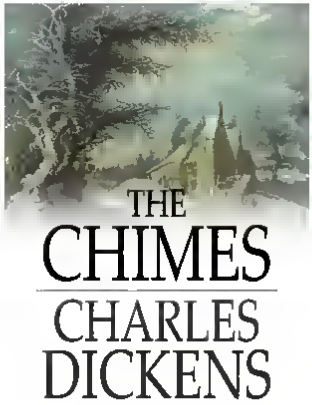
- "As an editar, apart fram the *Evening Mirrar*, he was associated with periadicals like the *American Manthly Magazine*, the *Weekly Mirrar*, and the *Natianal Press* which changed its title ta the *Hame Jaurnal* in 1846 (and during the twentieth century became the publicatian *Tawn and Cauntry*). His warks include *Dashes at life with a free pencil* (1845), *Rural Letters and ather recards af thaught at leisure*, written in the intervals *af* mare hurried literary labar (1849), *Pencillings by the Way: written during same years af residence and travel in Eurape* (1853) and *Peaple I have met; ar, Pictures af Saciety and Peaple af Mark, drawn under a thin veil af fictian* (1850).

- "He also produced volumes of poetry such as *Socred Poems* (1869) which relates verse to Biblical events. Willis' plays, *Bionco Visconti* (produced at the Park Theater in 1837) and *Tortesa the Usurer* are verse melodramas set in Italy; the latter was praised in a review by Poe as one of the best American plays. Willis wrote about domestic travel in accounts like *American Scenery* (1840); he also related his excursions abroad, in *A Summer cruise in the Mediterroneon on Board an American Frigote* (1853).

- "After reporting on the Civil War in the Home Journal and meeting Mrs. Lincoln in 1861 on a visit to Washington, Willis died in 1867 on his sixty-first birthday."

February 21

- And so we come to the fourth in the series of guest posts by Ian Keable. Ian raises the question of Forster's involvement in the fraud about *Pickwick*'s origin. I made Forster the driving force of the scheme after I had read what historians thought about Forster's work, and seeing evidence that Forster was not to be trusted – but it is entirely possible that Dickens was in charge throughout, not Forster. Perhaps the truth is that Forster and Dickens were kindred spirits – they were both scoundrels. And, indeed, perhaps that is the key to their relationship...
- Forster is shown left, in a portrait by Charles Edward Perugini
- Anyway, over to Ian, for another great post.
- Dickens's Conjuring Characteristics Considered
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick*, it would seem that John Forster comes out of it rather worse than Dickens, almost as if he is pulling the strings behind the scene. In this respect I would have thought Dickensians should be rather grateful to Stephen for not criticising Dickens himself too much for his deliberate deception over the origins of *Pickwick*.



- "When considering Dickens's interest in conjuring in my book *Charles Dickens Magician Conjuring in Life, Letters and Literature* I tried to get a feeling of why he might want to take up such a hobby. The most obvious reason is that he loved to be the centre of attention - the life and soul of the party. Performing as a conjurer certainly gave him that kudos
- Also, however, I think Dickens revelled in the role of being in charge, the man who knew more than anybody else. By definition, being a conjurer, means that you have secrets that others are unaware of. This enjoyment of 'power' over people is reflected in other parts of his life. His brief career as a mesmerist, for instance, where he hypnotised quite a few of his friends and relatives. And then there is the time when he had the actor Macready sobbing over his reading of *The Chimes* (what a wimp!) - afterwards Dickens wrote to his wife Catherine saying 'what a thing it is to have power'

- "I also found it interesting that Dickens appears reluctant to give anybody else credit for his abilities as a conjurer. The one time he does mention two professional conjurers - one of the conjurors was John Henry Anderson, shown on the left - who inspired him, it is to write that he performed a trick as good as one of them and better than the other! The French conjurer who completely blew him away in Boulogne in 1854, he referred to as "the devil" (it was only 60 years after Dickens's death that his identity was discovered). Almost as if only a non-human could get the better of him.

- "This suggests to me that here is a man who wouldn't want to be second-best in anything he did. Indeed it is arguable that he deliberately avoided situations where this might happen. Dickens never went to see the Victorian Spiritualist, DD Home (shown in this picture) despite entreaties from his friends to do so. Dickens despised Home, calling his autobiography "odious"; but he always made excuses to avoid attending one of his seances (although he participated in others). Home had a reputation for never being caught out, unlike other contemporary mediums; and I suspect Dickens avoided him because he was worried he might not work out how Home did his spiritualist stunts and therefore lose face in front of his friends
- My own reading of Dickens's character therefore shifts towards the conclusion that Dickens wasn't reluctantly persuaded by Forster to assist in obliterating Seymour's memory from *Pickwick Papers*; but indeed would have embraced such an idea, even perhaps being the main instigator.

February 21

- Peter Stadlera now writes about a society I mention in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, the Islington Literary and Scientific Society. When I came across this society, it was another of those "Aha!" moments, because there were various classes of membership - including "Corresponding Members", who would write to the Society about their discoveries. This of course is precisely the scenario that sets *The Pickwick Papers* in motion, with Mr Pickwick pledging to send back reports of his journeys to the headquarters of the main club in London: he, Winkle, Snodgrass and Tupman form a sub-group of the club, the Corresponding Society of the Pickwick Club. And here is the thing: Seymour's own brother-in-law, Edward Holmes, gave lectures to the society - so this is the obvious route by which Seymour heard about Corresponding Members.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Islington Literary & Scientific Society. The Islington Literary and Scientific Society was established in 1833 and first met in Mr. Edgeworth's Academy on Upper Street. Its goal was to spread knowledge through lectures, discussions, and experiments, politics and theology being forbidden.

- "A building, the Literary and Scientific Institution, was erected in 1837 in Wellington (later Almeida) Street, designed by Roumieu and Gough in a stuccoed Grecian style. It included a library (containing 3,300 volumes in 1839), reading room, museum, laboratory, and lecture theatre seating 500. The subscription was two guineas a year.

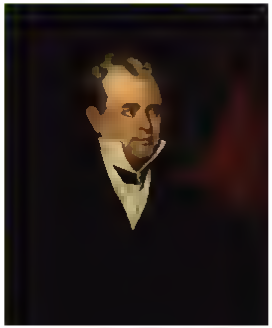
- "After the library was sold off in 1872, the building was sold or leased in 1874 to the Wellington Club, which occupied it until 1886. In 1885 the hall was used for concerts, balls, and public meetings. The Salvation Army bought the building in 1890, renamed it the Wellington Castle barracks, and remained there until 1955. The building became a factory and showroom for Beck's British Carnival Novelties for a few years from 1956, after which it stood empty. In 1978 a campaign began with the goal to redevelop the building as a theatre. A public appeal was launched in 1981, and a festival of avant-garde theatre and music was held there and at other Islington venues in 1982."

February 21

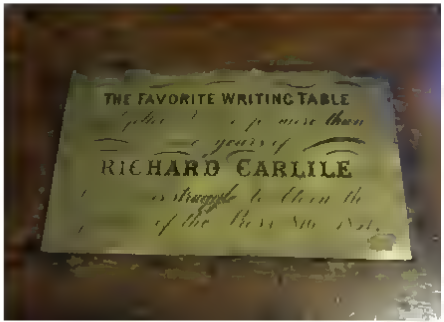
- Wong Sarah has just posted this about the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. Great pics, Sarah! She begins with a quote from *Death and Mr Pickwick*.
- “’ ”At the back of the shop I had a permanent exhibition of older prints, for the window always reflected the news of the time, and it seemed to me that the drawings had value even if the events they described had passed. Thus, behind a curtain in the rear, I had old Hogarths, Gillrays, Bunburys and other artists, and I charged a penny for admission to view. I filled the walls with humorous prints, floor to ceiling, like a parody of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, and I often heard guffaws from behind the curtain.’

- "In *Death and Mr. Pickwick*, there are several mentions of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. One is from an autobiographical note by an 'anonymous' print-shop proprietor/ress as quoted above. Interestingly, he/she also describes the fashionable beaus at the print-shop window performing mischievous stuff. Contrasted with a penny per admission to the rear of the print-shop, visitors were obliged to pay out for a catalogue one shilling each as admission price to the Royal Exhibition, as mentioned in *Life in London*, narrated by Pierce Egan and illustrated by the Cruikshanks. The catalogue for the first exhibition held on 21st April, 1760 (before the founding of Royal Academy of Arts in 1768) was sixpence each but only for the interested party concerned if they wanted to cough up the money voluntarily. The annual exhibition of the Royal Academy was held initially at Pall Mall, then relocated its residence to Somerset House in 1780 and Burlington House in the late 1860s.

February 21



- Here is a fantastic post by Peter Stadlera on the radical activist Richard Carlile, who appears in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. I particularly enjoyed seeing Carlile's writing table.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Richard Carlile Jr. talking about his father Richard. Richard Carlile was a radical British journalist who is best known for advocating the freedom of the press, abolition of the monarchy and the emancipation of women.



- "Carlile, a shoemaker's son, became a journeyman tinsmith in London in 1813. Influenced by the humanitarian Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* and dismayed by the economic depression of 1817, he began a new career as a salesman of two Radical weeklies, *The Black Dwarf* and (William) *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*. After Sherwin gave him control of his printing press in 1817, Carlile published several Radical and Deistic writings, among them his own *Political Litany*. For publishing Paine's works he was tried in 1819, heavily fined, and sentenced to a three-year term of imprisonment, which was extended to six years for nonpayment of the fine.

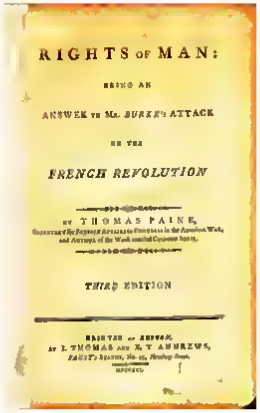
The Republican.

No. 2. Vol. I.] London, Friday, Sept. 3, 1819. [Price 2d.

- "He had become sole proprietor of Sherwin's weekly journal that same year (1819), and, changing its name to *The Republican*, he edited 12 volumes in prison.

- "Also in 1819 he witnessed the Peterloo massacre in Manchester (here we see an illustration by Cruikshank), where over-zealous local magistrates sent armed soldiers to disperse a peaceful public meeting in support of universal suffrage. At least 11 people were killed. Curiously, the government made no attempt to stop his editorial work in jail, though his wife, sister, and other persons who operated his printing shop were harassed by police and at times imprisoned. Carlile was released from prison in 1825 but was later jailed again for refusing to pay fines.

- "He subsequently edited two more volumes of *The Republicon* and two new weeklies, *The Gorgon* and *The Lion*. From 1829 to 1831 he led discussions in the London Rotunda, which became the centre of radical and freethinking activities. In total, Carlile spent more than nine years in prison. To Carlile's horror, his own sons Alfred and Thomas Paine Carlile set themselves up as pornographers a few yards from Holywell street in the Strand. Nor can he have been delighted by the consequences of the reduction of stamp duty: not a flourishing radical press, but the beginning of a mass-market and one providing a diet of sensationalism, titillation and censure. He died a pauper in 1843.



RIGHTS OF MAN:

BEING AN

ANSWER TO Mr. *BURKE'S* ATTACK

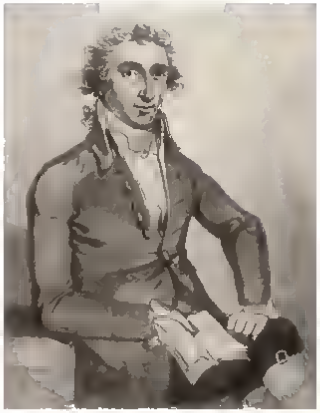
ON THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION

BY THOMAS PAINE,

THIRD EDITION

PRINTED FOR JOSEPH
BY I. THOMAS AND E. T. ANDREWS,
FAUST'S STATUE, No. 45, Newbury Street.



- "In this last illustration by Gillray named *Foshion before Eose* a besotted Thomas Paine—sporting the tricolor cockade and the bonnet rouge of the French Revolution—is here forcing an unhappy Britannica into a new shape. On the tape measure dangling from his coat pocket is written "Rights of Man." In a dig at Paine's early occupation, the thatched cottage in the background is labelled "Thomas Pain, Stay Maker from Thetford, Paris Modes by express."

February 22

- And so we come to the fifth and last in the series of guest posts by Ian Keable the author of *Charles Dickens Magician Conjuring in Life, Letters and Literature*. This has been a wonderful series and I am sure we would all like to extend a hearty thanks to Ian.
- Sagacious Dogs
- "I've always wondered if Jingle's reference in Chapter 2 of *The Pickwick Papers* to his sagacious dog ('Ah! you should keep dogs fine animals sagacious creatures dog of my own once pointer etc') was inspired by animal acts that were very much in vogue in the 19th century. I haven't actually come across one that was called 'sagacious' 'learned' seems a much more popular epithet. Hence there was the Learned Goose, the Learned Cats and perhaps most famous of all, Munito the Learned Dog. (The pictures show a commemorative plate and a playbill for Munito.)
- Munito is mentioned in an article that appears in Dickens's journal *All the Year Round* under the title 'Performing Animals'. Although written in 1867 the author refers back to having seen Munito in action in Piccadilly in London some 45 years before which in truth would have been in 1819, as that was Munito's last appearance in this country. There had been speculation that Dickens wrote the piece but it is now known, thanks to the recent find of a complete set of the journal annotated by Dickens as to the author of every article, that it was in fact written by Sir Charles Locock, an obstetrician to Queen Victoria.

MUNITO, **At HOME!**

SIGNOR CASTELLI

DOG, MUNITO,

AT HOME,

At No. 1, Leicester Square,

Where he will Exhibit at One and Three o Clock, Daily,

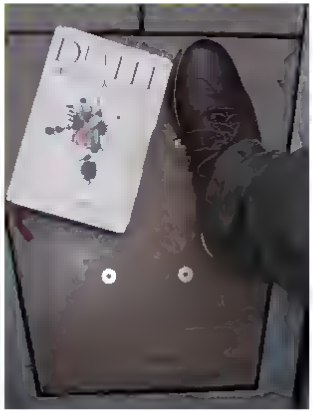
GEOGRAPHY, BOTANY, AND NATURAL HISTORY,

HUMANE SOCIETY,

Admittance One Shilling.

- "Another remarkable animal act around this time was Toby the Sapient Pig a predecessor of the Learned Pig, memorably illustrated by Rowlandson as *The Wonderful Pig*. Indeed so impressive was Toby that he even wrote his own autobiography. Whether or not Dickens ever saw such acts is hard to know, but he obviously enjoyed these type of performances. His daughter, Mamie, in her book *My Father as I Recall Him* writes about a friend who 'came from Chatham bringing with him a wonderful poodle who had been specially invited to perform all his tricks for my father's enjoyment.'
- Of course Seymour's illustration of *The Sagacious Dog* is a crucial part of the evidence in *Death and Mr Pickwick* to prove that its re-etching was not in accordance with Dickens's wishes, but rather because it was originally engraved on plates of defective steel. And it is also suggested by Stephen that Seymour came up with the term 'sagacious'. However the highly amusing staccato speech pattern adopted by Jingle would seem to have emanated from Dickens. Just shows how hard it to disentangle who was responsible for what in the early stages of *The Pickwick Papers*."

February 23

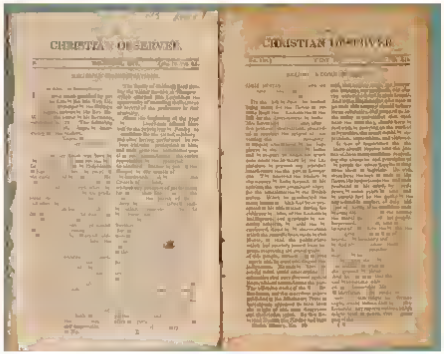


- Recently, I visited the grave of Joseph Grimaldi in Islington. Peter Stadlera has posted about his own visit to the grave, so I won't post about the grave itself, but rather I shall focus on a memorial to Grimaldi nearby: a coffin-shaped "xylophone", which plays musical notes if you step on it - so, one can "dance on Grimaldi's grave". Though perhaps I should say IN THEORY one can play musical notes - because, when I visited, the coffin was badly in need of tuning, and played a succession of dull thuds. However, you will see here a video of a young lady who shows how the coffin should sound:
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uP-gMPl0XG0

- The notes have been chosen so that one can play a song which was famously associated with Grimaldi, *Hot Codlins*. A 'codlin' was an apple, and the song tells of a drunken woman who sold roasted apples - part of the song turns up in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, when Grimaldi's alcoholic son attempts to sing it himself, but is too drunk to perform, and is hauled off stage. Here is a link to a video of the song being performed by a modern-day band:
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDRs4KWu74o

- And rather good it is, too! I bet you find yourself humming along to the chorus!

February 23



- It is always interesting to find a something in *Death and Mr Pickwick* which survives into modern times. Here, Peter Stadlera connects the well-known London bookstore Hatchard's with a publication I mention in the novel.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about *The Christian Observer*. *The Christian Observer* was a London evangelical periodical, serving a readership in the Church of England. It appeared from 1802 to 1874.

- "It was founded by William Hey in response to the dissenters. It was published by the bookseller John Hatchard. Various members of the Clapham Sect were associated with the paper from the outset. Josiah Pratt, who had called for such an evangelical periodical in a 1799 meeting of the Eclectic Society, served as editor for the first number in January 1802.

- "Pratt was succeeded after six weeks by Zachary Macaulay, who edited the periodical until 1816.Later editors were Samuel Charles Wilks (from 1816 to 1849), William Goode (from 1847 to 1849), John William Cunningham (from 1850 to 1858), and John Buxton Marsden (from 1859 to 1869). Contributors included Thomas Babington, the clergyman and theological writer Charles Smith Bird (1795-1862), the lay theological writer John Bowdler (1783-1815), the writer on prophecy William Cuninghame of Lainshaw (c. 1775-1849), the clergyman William Dealtry (1775-1847) and the clergyman and biblical scholar George Smith Drew (1819-1880)."

February 25

- The town of Deventer in the Netherlands holds an annual Dickens festival, and this has resulted in one of the most unusual pieces of Pickwickiana I have ever encountered: the Pickwick sexy rugby calendar!
- The town's rugby club is called The Pickwick Players, and they use an image of Mr Pickwick as the club's badge. There are both male and female teams. However the members of the ladies' team - as you will see in these images from their calendar - look nothing at all like Seymour's fat bald boozer!

september

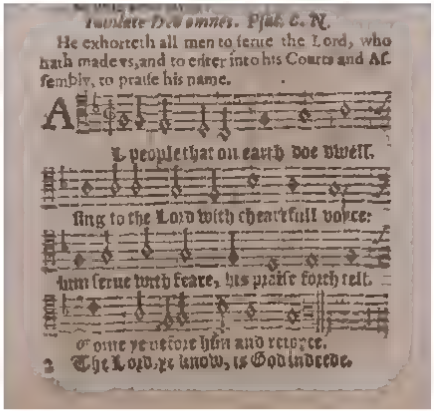
February 25

- This is Peter Stadlera's latest post on *Death and Mr Pickwick*. In a reply to a comment on his own page, Peter writes: "Doing research on locations, persons or - in this case a musical instrument - in *Death and Mr Pickwick* is a fascinating journey into the unknown, a trip back in time. You feel like an explorer and share your newly gained wisdom with the world."

- Peter Stadlera: “In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the square piano and wonder what's so special about it. The square grand piano is an earlier form of piano that is built in a rectangular shaped cabinet, sitting on four legs, with its strings running left to right. During the 18th and 19th centuries, more square grand pianos were built and sold in America and Europe than any other type of pianos combined! Today, however, they are all but extinct.

- "Square grand pianos were very large and very heavy musical instruments. They were not easily moved. They were reminders of the gilded Victorian age, often very elaborate and ornate. As 20th Century America began to streamline in style and become a modern industrialized nation, these beautiful pianos quickly became outdated and served as garish reminders of another time. Sadly, for the past 100 years, square grand pianos have consistently been chopped up, burned, or otherwise destroyed and lost forever.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick, Old 100th* or *Old Hundredth* was played on that square piano: it's a hymn tune in long metre from *Pseaumes Octante Trais de David* (1551) (the second edition of the Genevan Psalter) and is one of the best known melodies in all Christian musical traditions.
- The tune is usually attributed to the French composer Loys Bourgeois (c. 1510 - c.1560), shown on the left. Although the tune was first associated with Psalm 134 in the Genevan Psalter, the melody receives its current name from an association with the 100th Psalm, in a translation by William Kethe entitled *All Peaple that an Earth da Dwell*.


Iubilate Deo omnes. Psal. C. IV.

He exhorteth all men to serue the Lord, who hath made vs, and to enter into his Courts and Assembly, to praise his name.

A

L people that on earth doe dwell,

sing to the Lord with cheerfull voice:

him serue with feare, his praise forth tell.

Come ye before him and reioyce.

The Lord ye know, is God indeede.

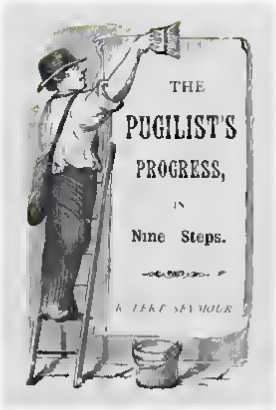
- "The melody is commonly sung with diverse other lyrics as well. Here we have the lyrics, let's sing in tune to the music:
-

You faithful servants of the Lord,
Sing out his praise with one accord,
While serving him with all your might
And keeping vigil through the night.
Unto his house lift up your hand
And to the Lord your praises send.
May God who made the earth and sky
Bestow his blessings from on high.
All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.
Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

February 25

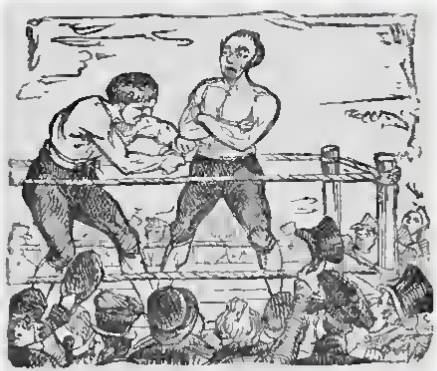
- ***MAJOR NEWS***MAJOR NEWS***MAJOR NEWS***MAJOR NEWS***
- *Death and Mr Pickwick* nominated for one of the world's most prestigious literary prizes!!!!!
- *Death and Mr Pickwick* is one of the thirteen books on the longlist for the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction! The shortlist of six books will be announced in March, and the winner will be announced on 18th June at the Borders Book Festival. You can be read about the prize here:
- http://www.walterscottprize.co.uk/2016-longlist-announced/

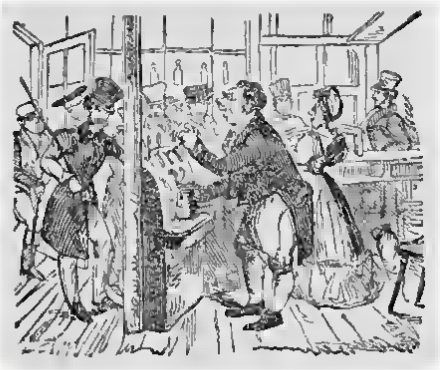
February 26



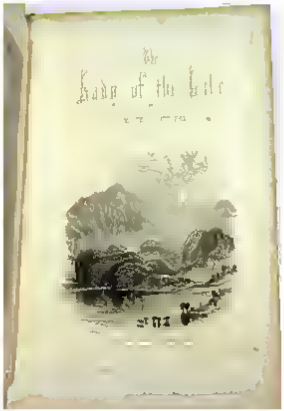
- In *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick*, I mention a publication called *Bell's Life in London*, whose sales rocketed when they included illustrations by various artists, including Seymour. Some of these illustrations were reprinted in a book called *The Gollery of Comicolities*, from which I have taken this sequence of Seymour's pictures, *The Pugilist's Progress*. (The title-picture is by another, unknown, artist.)

- The pictures are fairly crude, but that is probably down to the man who cut the printing blocks - Seymour often complained that woodcutters ruined his work, and he preferred the subtleties which could be achieved with etching and lithography.
- Originally, the pictures were accompanied by a verse-narrative, which I have not posted. I think the pictures alone tell a pretty clear tale, showing a pugilist's life, from aggressive baby to champion boxer.
- Note how the fighter retires to run a pub - apparently a fairly common thing for boxers, and something I mention in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. The final picture, in which the boxer is presented with a trophy, to acknowledge his lifetime achievements, could well be a representation of the Daffy Club.

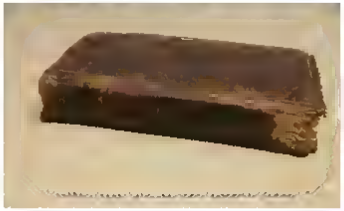


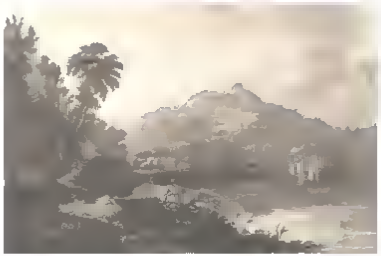


February 26



- Following on from yesterday's announcement that *Death and Mr Pickwick* had been nominated for the Walter Scott Prize, Peter Stadlera posts about a poem, by Scott, which is mentioned in my novel. Indeed, Scott forms part of the historical background to the emergence of *The Pickwick Papers* – Scott popularised the three volume novel, which was the general format for novels, prior to *Pickwick*'s usage of serial publication.

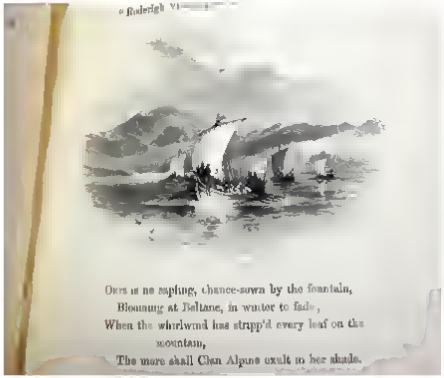




- Peter Stadlera: “In *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick* we read about *The Lody of the Loke*, an illustrated poem by Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter Scott began writing *The Lody of the Loke* in August 1809 while holidaying with his wife, Charlotte, and daughter, Sofia, in the Trossachs and along the shores and islands of Loch Katrine, the very scenes that would provide the poem's setting.

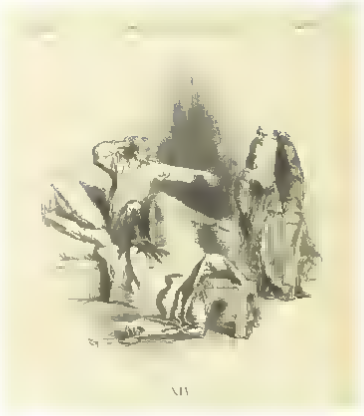
- "The narrative of the poem concerns the struggle between King James V and the powerful clan Douglas. The King has banished the entire family from his realm, including James of Douglas, the Earl of Bothwell, who had been his protector during his youth. The Earl and his daughter Ellen take refuge with Roderick Dhu in his castle on an island in Loch Katrine. At the beginning of the poem a mysterious knight calling himself James Fitz-James arrives at the castle and is granted hospitality. During his brief stay, he falls in love with Ellen but finds rivals for her affections in Roderick himself and in Malcolm Graeme, a young knight loyal to the King but moved by sympathy at the plight of Douglases. It is Malcolm that Ellen favours.

- "Facing attack from royal forces for sheltering Douglas, Roderick gathers his clan. Douglas, though, is loath to bring disaster upon his host, and sets out for the royal court at Stirling, determined to surrender. Fitz-James returns and offers to take Ellen to safety but is told that she loves another. He nonetheless presses on her a ring which, he says, will obtain any favour from the King. Travelling to Stirling, Fitz-James meets and quarrels with Roderick. In the ensuing fight, Roderick is mortally wounded and carried to Stirling as a captive. Ellen presents herself at court and, showing the ring, pleads for her father's pardon. She discovers that Fitz-James is no other than the King himself. The King and Douglas are reconciled through her intervention, and Ellen and Malcolm marry.

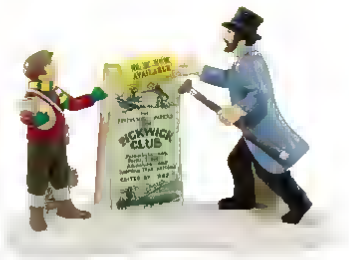


- "*The Lady of the Lake* marked the pinnacle of Scott's popularity as a poet. With 25,000 copies sold in eight months, it broke all records for the sale of poetry, and Scott's fame spread beyond Great Britain to the United States. The critics almost matched the enthusiasm of the public. In the *Edinburgh Review*, the habitually glacial Francis Jeffrey felt it far exceeded its predecessors: the story was 'constructed with infinitely more skill and address' and there was 'a larger variety of characters, more artfully and judiciously contrasted'. For the *British Critic*, the story itself was more interesting than in Scot's earlier poems, but the poem's real charm lay in 'painting real manners; and displaying the character of an interesting because singular people'.

- "Reservations were expressed by the *Critical Review* which thought Canto III superfluous and by the Rev. Francis Hodgson in the *Monthly Review*, for whom the composition was careless and the language barbaric. The public, though, continued to devour the poem. Sightseers flocked to Loch Katrine, and a hotel was built at Callander catering for those who wished to visit Ellen's Isle. *The Lady of the Lake* created a vogue for the Trossachs and is primarily responsible for the area's enduring popularity with tourists. Here we see engravings from illustrations by Birket Foster and John Gilbert (1853). Now Stephen is on the longlist of The Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction. The shortlist will be announced at the end of March and the winner at the Borders Book Festival on 18th of June. My most heartfelt congratulations for your outstanding novel Stephen. For me you already are the worthy winner!"



February 27



- There is an American company which produces a series of Victorian-themed collectables called the *Dickens Village* range. HUNDREDS of these items turn up on ebay. It has to be said that most of the range is "Dickens-esque", and could not really be classed as genuine Dickensiana - I am thinking or figurines of chimney-sweeps and models of old shops - but some items DO refer directly to Dickens, and there are even four items I have seen which connect strongly to *Death and Mr Pickwick*.
- The best of the four shows *The Pickwick Papers* on sale. Note the portrayal of Seymour's wrapper on the signboard and, as a VERY nice touch, note how it says "No. IV now available" - referring to the serial part in which Sam Weller made his debut, and *Pickwick* started to take off.

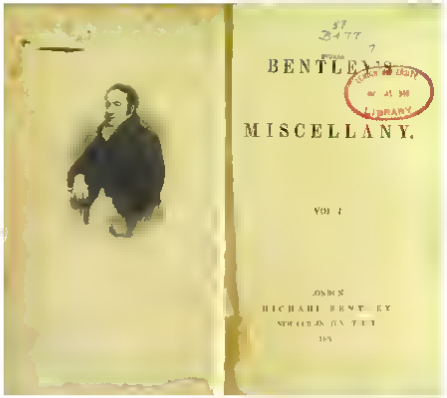
- Then there is Dickens submitting his first manuscript - the sign saying "Monthly Magazines, Editor's Box" alludes to the publication, *The Monthly Mogozine*, in which Dickens's first story appeared.

- Next, we get a portrayal of Dickens and his wife Catherine at their wedding - because the offer to write *Pickwick* means that they can afford to get married.

- Finally, we see The Leather Bottle, the pub which features in both *Death and Mr Pickwick* and *The Pickwick Papers*. With this fourth model, alas, the accuracy goes a little awry...I really don't know why it says the pub is located in Upper Knowle, a place in Bristol, rather than Cobham in Kent, where The Leather Bottle is located, and indeed the pub doesn't look much like the genuine Leather Bottle. Perhaps this piece should be considered as lying on the borderline between Dickensiana and Dickens-esque.

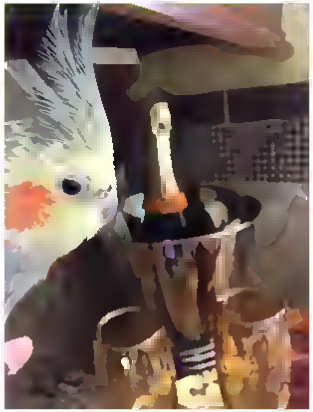
February 27

- *The Corlton Chronicle* gets mentioned in *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick* when Robert Buss is shown a cutting from the paper, which is apparently praising his work on *Pickwick* - but on closer inspection is praising the work of his successor, Hablot Browne. In this post, the great Peter Stadlera gives us more information about the publication...
- "In *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick* we read about *The Corlton Chronicle*. Two of Charles Dickens's stories *The Hospitol Potient* and *Hockney Cobs and Their Drivers* were originally published in *The Corlton Chronicle* in August 1836.



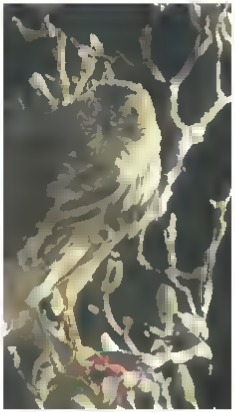
- "The editor Percival Weldon Banks asked Dickens to write a series of sketches, but the paper failed after less than a year. Dickens remained friendly with Banks whom he later asked to contribute to *Bentley's Miscellany*."

February 28



- Announcing ... the search for a fourth official *Death and Mr Pickwick* pet!
- Beryl Kelner Cook, the owner of Gypsy, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cockatiel, has just sent me this photo of Gypsy receiving the news that *Death and Mr Pickwick* has been nominated for one of the world's major literary prizes, the Walter Scott Prize. Beryl said "Gypsy's so excited she thinks you should have a bottle of champagne!
- As DaMP fans know, there are currently three official *Death and Mr Pickwick* pets - in addition to Gypsy, there is Sir Pelzi, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cat, and Dory the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* parrot. There was a fourth official pet, but sadly last year we lost Lady Jenny, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* poodle. I am sure that Lady Jenny would like to see the role of the fourth official pet continue, and so if anyone would like to nominate their pet for the position, please send me a photo, and tell me a little about your pet

- In response to that appeal, Sir Pelzi sent in this photo of his pet, the little black cat...but I don't think that's e*xactly* the sort of pet we're looking for...though perhaps there could be a category of official pets-of-pets...rather like the idea of stories-within-stories, which of course is part of the structure of *Death and Mr Pickwick* and *The Pickwick Papers*.



- And Nancy Wilschke said: “Would you accept an official *Death and Mr. Pickwick* red tailed hawk? I'm afraid if you don't, he'll make you an offer you can't refuse.”
- I said to Nancy that, if she tames him, then of course he could be the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* red tailed hawk!

February 29

- I have, in previous posts, covered the booze-related memorabilia which exists for *Pickwick*. But there is a lot of smoking in The *Pickwick Papers* too and, as you would expect, there are *Pickwick* themed tobacco items. As you can see here, this includes cigars, tobacco jars, cigarette holders, ashtrays (including one ashtray with a rare appearance by the medical student Bob Sawyer), lighters, pipes and even a pipe tamper in the shape of Sam Weller's father!

PICKWICK
CIGAR

LIGHTERS
HANWAY
ARISTOCRAT
DIPLOMA
RENEWAL SMOKING STICKS

Old Pipe
WALEY FRANK
Limited

February 29

- *The Pickwick Papers* is linked to many real places and buildings. This is all part of the appeal of the novel - as it meant that readers could visit the places mentioned in the text. I wanted *Death and Mr Pickwick* to parallel *The Pickwick Papers*, so there are plenty of places mentioned in my novel too. In his latest post, the amazing Peter Stadlera tells us more about one of the buildings I mention...
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* Stephen takes you to Hamsterly Hall in Durham where we meet Matthew Methusalah, the old fox hunter. Hamsterley Hall is an 18th-century English country house at Hamsterley, Rowlands Gill, County Durham, England.

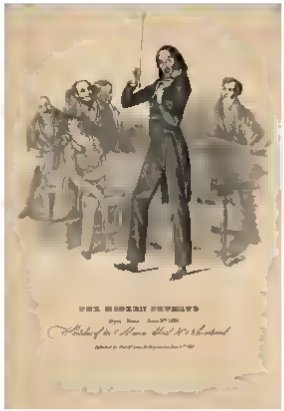
- "The estate at Hamsterley was given, in 1762, by Sir John Swinburne to his younger brother Henry Swinburne. In 1769, Henry carried out substantial alterations to the then existing house to create the present two-story, four-bayed castellated Gothic Revival-style mansion. Swinburne died in 1803 and in 1806 the property was sold to Anthony Surtees. His son Robert Smith Surtees, the novelist (the author of *Jorrocks*), acquired the estate in 1838. He was High Sheriff of Durham in 1856. He died in 1864, leaving his estate to his daughter Eleanor, who married John Gage Prendergast Vereker, 5th Viscount Gort in 1885. Their first son John Vereker, 6th Viscount Gort VC was succeeded in 1946 by his brother Standish Vereker, 7th Viscount MC who lived at Hamsterley until his death in 1975.

- "At the moment, fresh plans have been drawn up for executive homes in the grounds of the country estate. Father and son Bill and Steven Spry have submitted plans for 35 homes at Hamsterley Hall."

March 1

- A few weeks ago, it was reported that scholars now believe fairy tales to be older - MUCH older - than previously thought. Some tales may go back thousands of years, to the bronze age, with the earliest-known tale being *The Smith and The Devil*. In this, a blacksmith strikes a deal with the Devil (or, in some versions of the story, another malevolent supernatural being, such as Death or a genie) in which he exchanges his soul for the power to weld any materials together. The smith then uses this power to stick the Devil to an immovable object, such as a tree, to renege on his side of the bargain.
- When I read about *The Smith and the Devil*, it struck me that the story which inspired the opera *Der Freischutz*, as featured in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, is a variation on this ancient tale. Although *Der Freischutz* does not concern a blacksmith as such, it certainly features blacksmith-like activities - because metal is melted and shaped into bullets.

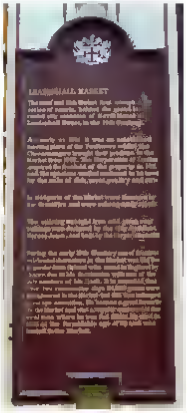
- Furthermore, the protagonist of the *Der Freischutz* backstory, Georg Schmid (note the surname - the German word for Smith) makes a deal with supernatural forces to gain the ability to shoot bullets that will always reach their target. And the deal is reneged upon. Schmid's story is not exactly the same as *The Smith and The Devil*, but close enough to imply that *Der Freischutz* evolved from an ancient original when firearms and gunpowder were invented
- This means that *Death and Mr Pickwick* has very, very old roots. Because *Der Freischutz* is not, as you might think, a peripheral thing to the novel. Seymour's fascination with *Der Freischutz* represents his earliest professional interest in the incompetent sportsman motif - which would later manifest itself in the form of Mr Winkle, in *The Pickwick Papers*. Of course, Mr Winkle doesn't call upon supernatural powers to make himself into a great marksman - he simply lies



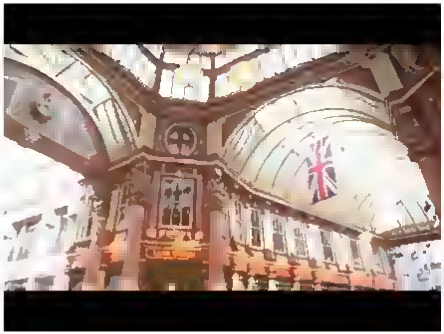
- Strangely enough, some years after Seymour became interested in *Der Freischutz*, he drew a man who could himself be seen as a variation on the ancient tale - because Seymour drew the great violinist Paganini, as can be seen here. (A tiny "RS" monogram is on the left hand side of the picture.) Many believed Paganini had acquired his musical gifts because he had made a pact with the Devil. This is, of course, rather like the twentieth-century blues guitarist Robert Johnson, who is said to have made a deal with the Devil at a crossroads to gain his abilities as a guitarist. And, as you will recall in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, the bullet-casting scene with Schmid takes place at...a crossroads.

March 1

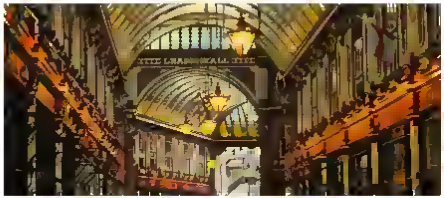
- Peter Stadlera has now posted about Leadenhall Market. This place actually has personal significance for me, because I once dressed up here as....Mr Pickwick! This was when I was still a member of the Dickens Fellowship. (I resigned in 2012.) There was a plan to hold an annual 'Meet the public' day, and I suggested that it might be held on May 13th, the day when Mr Pickwick began his travels. (After the meeting of the club, on May 12th, at the start of *The Pickwick Papers*.) So, I agreed to dress up as Mr Pickwick, and some other members of the Fellowship also put on costumes, and a stall was set up, promoting the Fellowship, and readings were given from Dickens's novels. I don't know whether the Fellowship ever held a second such event, though. Anyway, great post, Peter.



- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Leadenhall Market. Well let's have a look at that market: Leadenhall Market dates back to the 14th century and is situated in what was the centre of Roman London. Originally a meat, poultry and game market, it now features a variety of vendors as well as commercial shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs.



- "Starting as the site of a manor, Leadenhall has survived changes in use, rebuilding, and even the Great Fire to become a popular destination for city residents, visitors and workers. In the early 1300s the Manor of Leadenhall was listed as belonging to Sir Hugh Neville. Within a few years the area around the manor had become a popular meeting place for first poulterers, and then cheesemongers. Former Lord mayor Richard 'Dick' Whittington gifted Leadenhall to the City in 1411 and Lord Mayor Simon Eyre replaced the manor hall with a public granary, school and chapel in 1440, again as a gift to the citizens of London. The market was enlarged to provide a site for selling poultry, grain, eggs, butter, cheese, herbs and other foodstuffs.



- "Over the next 200 years Leadenhall Market was a centre of commerce and further markets were added for wool, leather and cutlery. In 1666 Leadenhall Market suffered only a small amount of damage in the Great Fire. Rebuilding after the fire, the market became a covered structure and was divided into the Beef Market, the Green Yard and the Herb Market. In 1881 the City's architect Sir Horace Jones, who was also the architect of Billingsgate and Smithfield Markets, redesigned Leadenhall. His designs replaced the earlier stone structure with wrought iron and glass. The Poultry Market remained at Leadenhall until the 20th century, by which time all shop units were let for the sale of meat, fish or provisions.

- “By the mid 20th century the shops were also being used for general retailing and leisure and by the end of the century Leadenhall Market had evolved into one of the City's five principal shopping centres. Looking at the beautifully clean and vibrant Victorian buildings of today it's hard to imagine the noise and smells of a 19th century market, but if you look closely at the shop fronts you will see the wrought iron hooks where produce used to hang.

www.alamy.com EN4410

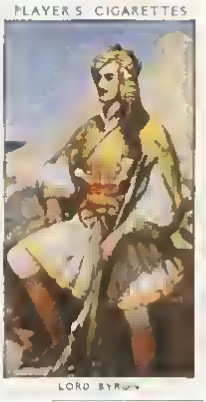
- "During the 18th century 'Old Tom' was a celebrated character in Leadenhall. He was a gander who managed to escape his fate of being slaughtered. He became a great favourite in the market, even being fed at the local inns. After his death in 1835 at the age of 38, he lay in state in the market and was buried on site."

March 2

- A couple days ago, after I had done the post on Pickwickian "smokiana", I began thinking about the related field of cigarette cards. One set of cards, which appeared in Players' cigarettes packets in 1932, featured dandies - and Dickens himself makes an appearance. In *Death and Mr Pickwick*, this aspect of Dickens's personality is mentioned in the first meeting between the writer and Hablot Browne:

- "Do you know," said Browne, when the two men were seated, "when I was told Boz lived in Furnivals, I knew he would be you."
"Did you? How?"
"For one thing, the colourful waistcoats I have seen you wear. So many people in Furnivals look like they are in the legal profession - and you do not."

- Other Players' dandies are mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, too : Beau Brummell, Byron, George IV and Richard II.


PLAYER'S CIGARETTES
LORD BYRON

PLAYER'S CIGARETTES
KING GEORGE THE FOURTH

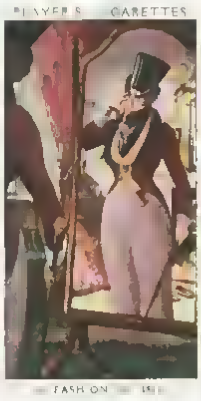
- The cards also show peacocky military uniforms of the nineteenth century, and this too has relevance to my novel dragoons are in action in the scene about the riots in Bristol, and hussars and lancers are mentioned when Seymour visits The Bull in Rochester.

PLAYER'S CIGARETTES

OFFICERS 11TH HUSSARS

PLAYER'S CIGARETTES

THE 17TH LANCERS 18[illegible]



- The card showing “A fashion of 1822”, could not fail to remind me of the Houghton angling club’s “most comfortable landowner”, the member with “a purplish eye and elegant lashes, whose languor and confidence were in proportion to his wealth” because the Houghton club was founded in 1822.

- The last dandy shown here, Prince Puckler-Muskau, does not turn up in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, but he is still part of the world of my novel, as the Prince has sometimes been seen as the 'original' of Count Smorltork, in *The Pickwick Papers*.

March 2

- Here is a superb post by Peter Stadlera on the man whose mispronunciation of 'John Forster' was one of the inspirations for the fraud that Dickens and his associates carried out concerning the origins of *Pickwick*. A post with everything - biographical information, a place for DaMP fans to visit, and a cute cat!
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we meet Sir James Emerson Tennent. Sir James Emerson Tennent (1804-1869) was an Irish politician. He studied in his native Belfast and in Trinity College, Dublin, where he became a doctor of Law. A fervent supporter of the Greek Revolution, he travelled to Greece and published a number of works on this country such as *Picture of Greece* (1826), *Letters from the Aegean* (1829), and *History of Modern Greece* (1830). Tennent became active in politics and was elected to the House of Commons in 1832.

- "In 1843 he was knighted and appointed colonial secretary of Ceylon, modern day Sri Lanka. He wrote and published books on the natural history and commerce of Ceylon, and was a frequent contributor to various reviews.

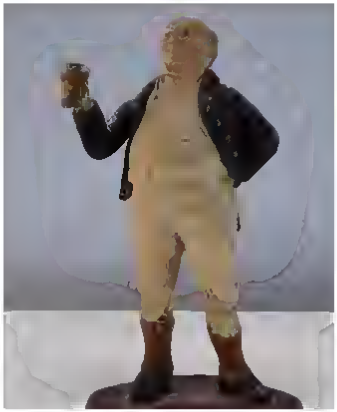
- "Ole Tom is an illustration by Harrison Weir, depicting the beloved pet cat of the late Sir James Emerson Tennent. It was published alongside an Obituary for Sir James that appeared in the April 1876 issue of *The Animal World* (A Monthly Advocate of Humanity). The obituary recalls the work done by Sir James to expose the cruelty perpetrated against both dogs and turtles in the island nation of Ceylon. The drawing shows an intelligent and affectionate cat.

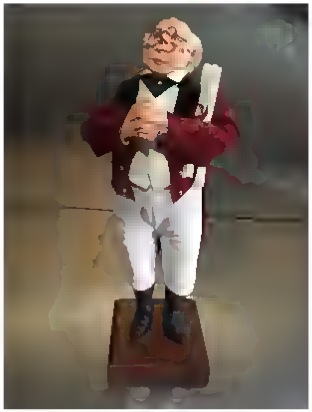
- "Here we see Tempo Manor, Co Fermanagh this was once the country residence of Tennent, which he completely rebuilt in the 1860s. Below is a lovely winter view of the present house taken a few years ago.

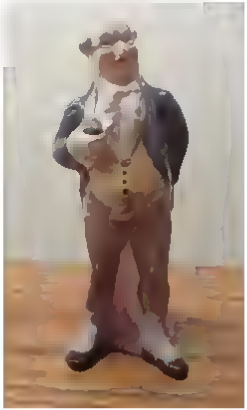
- "And here is an illustration of the original house, once owned by the Maguires.
- Charles Dickens, a friend of Sir James and his wife Letitia, stayed at Tempo Manor while visiting Ireland in the mid-1860s."

March 3

- A few months ago, I did a series of posts about three-dimensional representations of Mr Pickwick. However, the flow of Pickwickiana continues unabated, and it is time for an update. So here is a post featuring new discoveries of dolls, models and porcelain figures. I have also found a number of 'functional' three-dimensional Pickwicks which are new to me - so here you will see Mr Pickwick as table-lamp, dish, propelling pencil, candle snuffer, brass doorknocker, decanter and cups, and peppershaker.

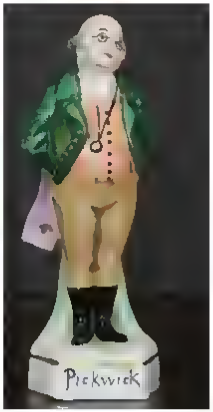


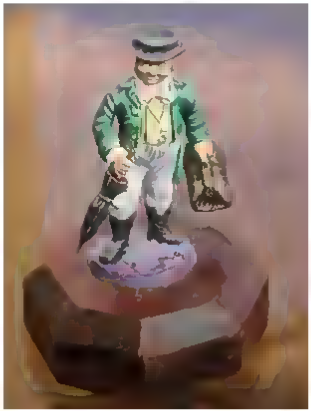


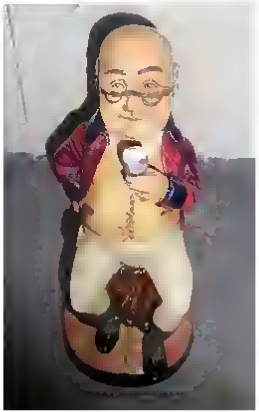


PICKWICK

MR PICKWICK

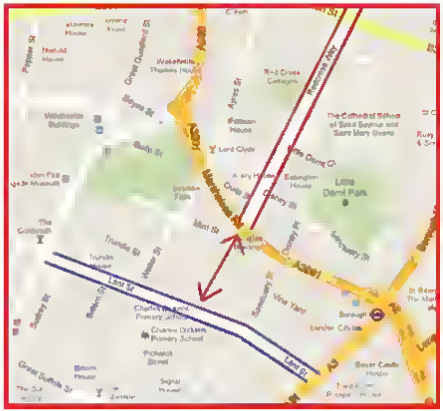

Pickwick





- And here is Mr Pickwick as a wine cork. (And what could be more appropriate as a representation of Mr Pickwick than that!)

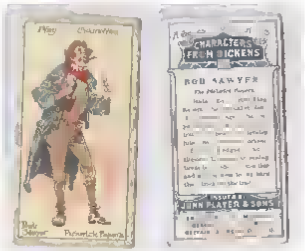
March 3



- In his investigations into the historical background to *Death and Mr Pickwick*, Peter Stadlera now takes us to Lant Street, and Guy's Hospital. In this part of London you will also find the George Inn, London's last galleried coaching inn, which has been featured in posts by myself and by Jamie Johnston.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Lant Street, near Guy's Hospital.

- "Guy's Hospital is a teaching hospital in Southwark founded by wealthy printer and publisher Thomas Guy (1645-1724) which was built in 1721-24. Guy was a publisher of unlicensed Bibles who had made a fortune in the South Sea Bubble.
- The hospital was originally established to treat 'incurables' discharged from St Thomas' Hospital. Guy had been a Governor and benefactor of St Thomas' and his fellow Governors supported his intention by granting the south-side of St Thomas' Street for a peppercorn rent for 999 years. Guy is interred in the crypt of the Chapel of his foundation.



- "Back to Dickens: Bob Sawyer, a medical student at Guy's Hospital, and 'a carver and cutter of live people's bodies', had lodgings in Lant Street in *The Pickwick Papers*.

- Here we see some pictures of Guy's Hospital.

- "I've found a fitting illustration by Thomas Rowlandson *The Apothecary's Prayer*!! An 18th century apothecary prays for an outbreak of a host of diseases so that he and the undertaker can make money
- Below is Rowlandson's *The Bodysnatchers*."

March 4

- This is the first piece of abstract art I have encountered which is inspired by *The Pickwick Papers*. 'Pickwick at Chelsea' I contacted the artist, Davina Nicholas, to find out more. This is what she said

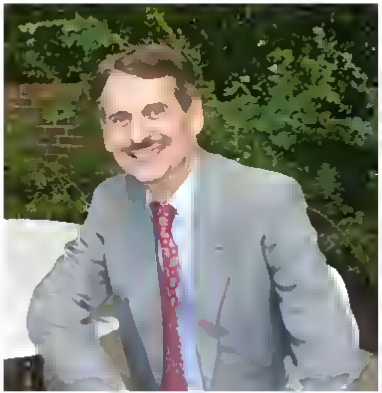
- "As the painting started to form, when trying to interpret a different idea, I realised that it was triggering a memory of a scene from Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*. The chaotic situations the members got into was illustrated in the stagecoach and luggage, where it is difficult to understand how all the people could arrive safely when there are so many along with their bags on such a small vehicle – including the driver and guard.

- *The Pickwick Papers* is my favourite story because it takes a much lighter note, and was written at a time before Dickens realised he could use his books to publicise the social reforms he so strongly believed in. The film was a virtual comedy with a message and reflected the ethos of the book, and I believe Dickens would have been very pleased with it. But let's be honest – maybe without his following novels, which contained a dark side, the terrible situations described may have taken a lot longer to be eliminated, such as the Yorkshire schools."

- Check out Davina's website www.davinanicholas.com

March 5

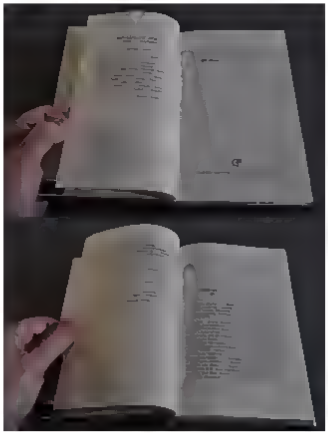
- Yesterday, I received a wonderful email from a person who had just read *Death and Mr Pickwick*. That person is Dr Elliot Engel. Dr Engel is the author of ten books, and has presented a PBS mini-lecture series on Charles Dickens. His articles have appeared in numerous newspapers and magazines including *Newsweek*, and he has lectured around the world. He is also the author of the book which, in my view, is the most important work on *The Pickwick Papers* that has ever been written.
- Let me first show you what Dr Engel's email says, and then I shall talk about the immense importance of Dr Engel's work to me:



- "It is just too bad that an email abbreviation is responsible for taking a powerful expression of awe and turning it into an unthinking cliche. I refer to OMG for 'Oh my God.'
- But having just finished your breathtakingly magnificent book, what filled my mind was certainly not the insipid OMG but instead the open-mouthed, panting, utterly agog.
- "O-H, M-Y G-O-D!!!!!!!"
- I don't know what to say. First, it was the most DELICIOUS reading experience I've enjoyed since reading Dickens himself. And as opposed to the mere Charles, your writing style is not just Dickensian but Hogarthian and Smollettesque to boot. I learned so much about a world of things but nineteenth century artists especially. And you are so spot on about Dickens and Forster. And your descriptive powers are broad, wide, deep, and delightful. And you unfold the whole complex story with an unerring stride. As you see, I am so discombobulated by your brilliance that I'm simply listing virtues with no defining order whatsoever.

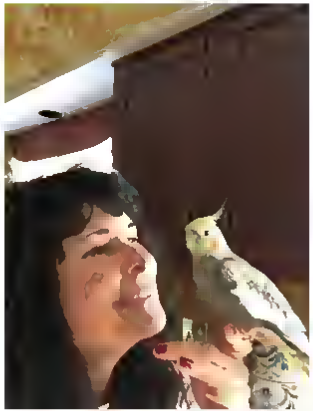
- "I love the fact that the book is 802 pages since, if you've read the Amazon reviews, you've seen how many begin with 'I can't believe I just read an 800-plus book'--as if had it been but 797 pages there would have been no real glory in finishing it. As I first began reading, I circled particular passages that I wanted to single out for compliments; alas, now my copy of your book has hardly two pages in a row without a mark so I am stymied. Rather than giving you the thoughtful critique you deserve, I am incapable of anything but appreciative babble.
- Perhaps later, once your authorial spell has worn off, I shall be able to praise more judiciously, but for now I can only repeat in closing...
- OH MY GOD!"

- During the years when I was writing *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick*, my constant companion was Dr Engel's book *The Pickwick Popers: An Annototed Bibliogrophy*. It is a guide to the vast literature on *Pickwick* up to 1990, when his book was published. Putting it together was a monumental work of scholarship - especially as it was written in the days before the internet.

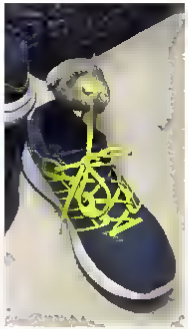


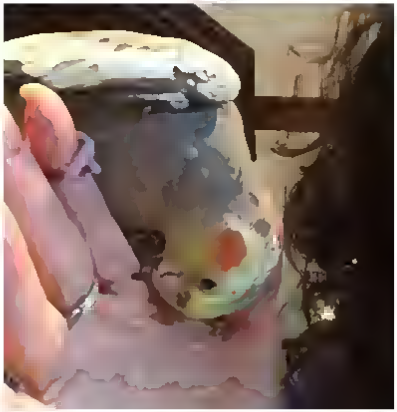
- Although it is now in need of updating, it remains THE key book on *The Pickwick Papers*, and indeed when I attended the Dickens Universe conference on *Pickwick* in Santa Cruz in 2007, the book's crucial importance to anyone undertaking the serious study of *Pickwick* was flagged up on the reading list. No book had more of an influence on *Death and Mr Pickwick* than this one. So you can imagine the emotional impact that Dr Engel's email had upon me.
- Do take a look at Dr Engel's website
- http://www.authorsink.com/
- which includes details of his lecture tours, CDs and DVDs.

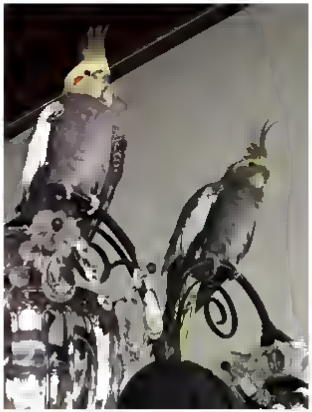
March 5



- Beryl Kelner Cook has posted five great pics of Gypsy, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cockatiel..



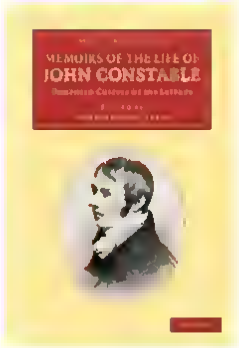




- Below is a closeup of the ornament, depicting Gypsy, that was commissioned by Beryl's stepdaughter Katharine and her husband Joseph Reffruschinni.

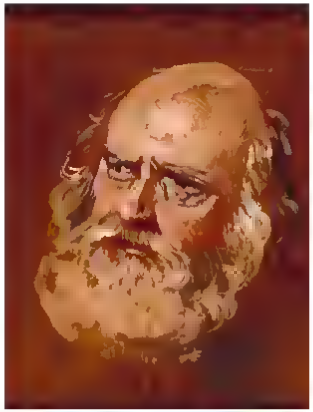
March 5

- Peter Stadlera now posts about the artist Charles Leslie, who was with Joseph Severn on the night that Severn was nearly crushed to death in a stampede at a theatre. I think Sue Brown, the author of the great biography of Severn, *Joseph Severn, A Life: The Rewards of Friendship* was the person who identified Leslie as the person who accompanied Severn to the theatre. Later in life - and later in *Death and Mr Pickwick* - Leslie drew a picture of Mr Pickwick which appeared in an 1847 edition of the book, from which Dickens cut out all the pictures, apart from Leslie's frontispiece.
  Sir Pelzi's mention of Lady of course refers to the beautiful cat who is his own personal Dulcinea...



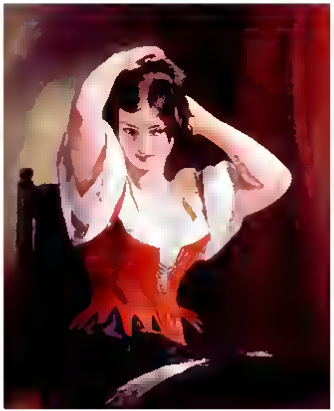
- "Charles Robert Leslie (1794-1859) was an Anglo-American painter and writer on art (his parents were American but he spent most of his career in England and is usually considered part of the history of British rather than American art). In his day he was well known for his paintings of literary themes, but he is now remembered mainly as a writer, above all for his *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable* (1843), which is regarded as one of the classics of artistic biography (Constable was a close friend).

- "I've selected some of his paintings: *A Scene from Tristram Shandy* ('Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman')...



- "...*The Head of Falstaff*...

- "...*Sancha Panza*...



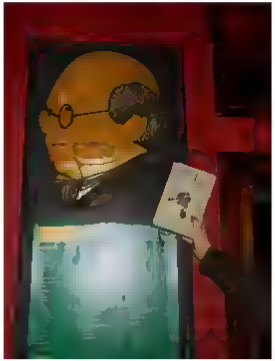
- "...*The Dulcineo del Toboso* (Sir Pelzi says Lady is quite similar to her)

- "...and *Sketch for 'The Duke ond Duchess Reoding "Don Quixote"'* .
- He is buried in Kensal Green Cemetery."

March 6

- Presenting...the *Death and Mr Pickwick* "Amazing Race" across Switzerland!!!!
- In Switzerland, there is a chain of seven Pickwick pubs; and, inspired by the TV show the *Amazing Race*, Elaine and I formed the plan of visiting all these pubs in five days. So, here you will see me on the train heading towards Geneva, where the first Pickwick pub on our tour was located.

- The Geneva Pickwick pub, the oldest, was established in 1969.



- And, as you can see from these photos, Mr Pickwick himself was present at the pub's opening.

- Note too the picture of Sam Weller and his father beside the mirror.

- There was also a digital sign, displaying messages, which I posed beneath - and Elaine shot a video here, with a truly Pickwickian message, which you see at this link:
- https://www.facebook.com/deathandmrpickwick/videos/vb.512473502219840/806516666148854/?type=2&theater

- After the pub, we went to our hotel, to be greeted by the gigantic St Bernard cuddly toy and the sign for the hotel's Edelweiss restaurant, where we would have breakfast the next day. We needed to be up early, for the next stage of the tour beckoned...Tomorrow, you'll see us in Bern.

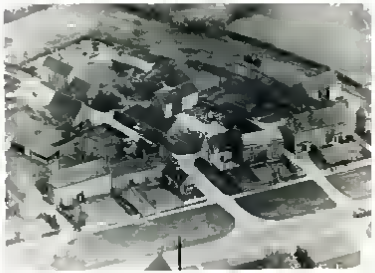
March 6

- Although *Pickwick* is known as the Dickens novel which has inset stories, *Nicholas Nickleby* has a couple of these stories too, and one of them, the tale of *The Baron of Grogzwig*, is mentioned in *Death and Pickwick*. It always struck me that this tale was an allusion to Seymour - how could Dickens make a pun on swigging grog in the story's title WITHOUT thinking of the most fateful episode of grog-swigging in his life: the Sunday evening when he invited Seymour to Furnival's Inn for a glass of grog? Yet, as far as I am aware, this has never been noticed by academics. Anyway, in Peter Stadlera's latest post, he takes us to the villlage of Long Bennington, where the tale is told.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Wheatsheaf at Long Bennington.

- "The village of Long Bennington is stretched along the old Great North Road but the houses are set well back to leave space for a village green though now divided up into large front gardens. With the A1 running to the west, the occasional local vehicle is lost in the wide expanse of tarmac laid long ago for serious traffic. It is a wide, spacious village, with room for three pubs The Royal Oak, The Wheatsheaf (now Whittakers) and The Reindeer.

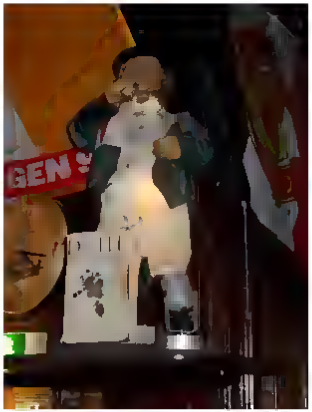
- "Long Bennington is supposed to be the last place King Harold of Wessex camped before the Battle of Hastings. Today the village has a population of 2,100."

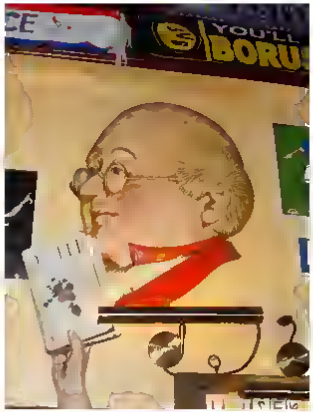


March 7

- Continuing…the *Death and Mr Pickwick* "Amazing Race" Tour of Switzerland.
- Our second stop was Bern.

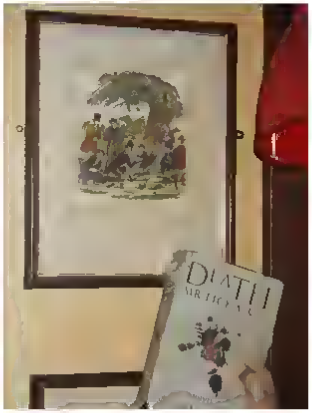
- It was great to see that the pub there had quite a lot of Pickwickiana on display. This included a very unusual painting of Mr Pickwick - some might even say the painting bordered on being creepy, but that in itself was an interesting new perspective on the character.



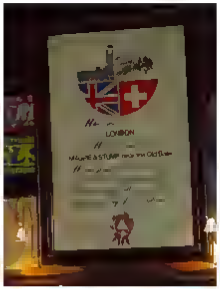

YOU'LL

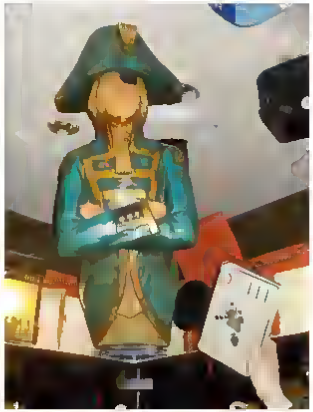
LONDON to BATH
STAGE

CLASSIC PUB FOOD
WELCOME TO THE PLACE WHERE
PEOPLE MEET & EAT
MR. PICKWICK SAYS
CHEERS!



- Note too the item below showing a Pickwickian name for a pub, The Magpie and Stump.





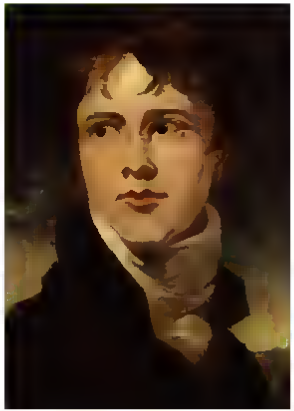
- We also briefly visited another pub named after a real person who gets mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, Admiral Nelson. Take a look at the cannon muzzles above the bar!

- In the evening, we went to a restaurant, the Altes Tramsdepot, which just happened to be holding a Canadian themed food event This provided one of those rare occasions when I can persuade my Canadian wife, Elaine, to appear in pics taken at the dining table.

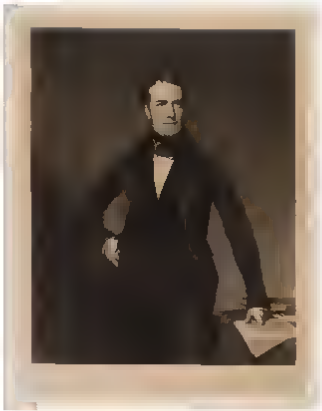
- Mind you, I got snapped too in the middle of a bison burger...

- ...which had to be washed down afterwards, of course!

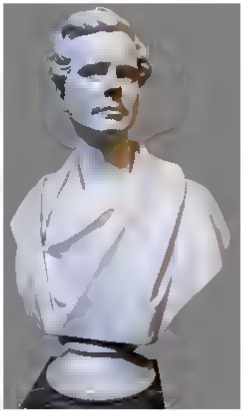
March 7



- Peter Stadlera s latest post concerns one of the lawyers, Sir William Follett, who featured in the famous Norton v Melbourne adultery trial - the trial which influenced Dickens s portrayal of Bardell v Pickwick. Readers of *Death and Mr Pickwick* will recall that Follett tried to use innocent letters to prove that a sizzling affair had taken place between the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, and Caroline Norton, and this was so ridiculous that the court broke down into laughter, and was one of the reasons the case against Melbourne failed. When I was researching the case, I came across an interesting perspective by a modern lawyer. perhaps Follett deliberately wanted the case against Melbourne to collapse, and that was why he resorted to the letters. After all, it would be the most serious matter if the Prime Minister were charged with adultery, and the government fell. So perhaps Follett used the letters, knowing that they would weaken his case. This was not something I pursued in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, but it certainly made food for thought



- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we meet Sir William Webb Follett (1796-1845), an English lawyer and politician who served as MP for Exeter (1835-1845). He served twice as Solicitor-General, in 1834-5 and 1841 and as Attorney-General in 1844. He was knighted in 1835. He was reputed to have been the 'greatest advocate of the century'.



- "In 1830 Follett married the eldest daughter of Sir Ambrose Hardinge Giffard (1771-1827), Chief Justice of British Ceylon. He and Jane Mary (1808-1847) had five sons (George, Hardinge, Richard, Edward and Robert) and a daughter Anna. His health began to fail him in 1838, and he was permanently injured by a severe illness in 1841. In 1845 his health broke down, and he was compelled to relinquish legal practice and to visit the south of Europe to recuperate. He returned to England in March 1845, but the tuberculosis, with which he had previously been diagnosed, reasserted itself and he died in London on the 28th of June 1845. He was buried in the Temple Church in London.

- "A plaque at Follett Lodge (still a nice mansion), Ferry Road, Topsham, Devon EX3 0JN reads: Follett Lodge. In this house was born Sir Wm Webb Follett, Attorney General B. 1798—D. 1845. He was the eldest son of Benjamin Follett (d.1833) and his wife Anne (Webb). He was educated at Exeter and at Trinity College, Cambridge

- "In the chapel of St Michael in Westminster Abbey is an over life-size white marble statue in memory of Sir William Webb Follett. He wears a barrister's gown and holds a scroll in his left hand, resting it on three books. The statue is by William Behnes and was originally in the north transept. The inscription reads:

- This monument, raised by public subscription, is sacred to the memory of Sir William Webb Follett. He died on the 28th June 1845, being at the time of his decease representative in Parliament for the city of Exeter and Attorney General to Queen Victoria. Of unblemished conduct in every relation of life, of manner gentle and prepossessing; combining great legal knowledge with extraordinary powers of persuasive eloquence, he attained, with the esteem, admiration, and goodwill of all who witnessed his brilliant career, the highest eminence as an advocate and Parliamentary speaker. The general hope and expectation that he was destined for the highest honours of the law were blighted by his untimely death. After a severe and protracted illness, aggravated, if not caused by his unremitting devotion to his public and professional duties, he died at the age of 48 years, heartily thankful to Almighty God for the many mercies vouchsafed to him, and in humble reliance on the merits of his Redeemer."

March 8

- Day 3 of the *Death and Mr Pickwick* "Amazing Race" across Switzerland...
- We reached the Pickwick pub at Baden on the very day it was celebrating its 31st birthday.

- This was my favourite pub of the entire tour, and one of the main reasons for that was the charming barmaid Ines, whom you can see here.

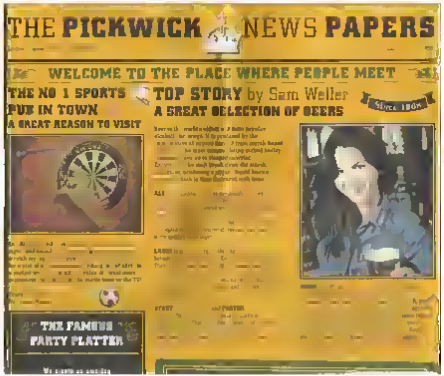
- There was also a lot of Pickwickiana on display at this pub which even included a robot Mr Pickwick! Elaine took a video of this robot, which you can see at the link below:
- https://www.facebook.com/deathandmrpickwick/videos/vb.512473502219840/807494789384375/?type=2&theater

of the
PICKWICK
CLUB

Charles Dickens

STOLATT &
Esteemed
Purveyors of
Gentlemen's
QUIZZING
& SPECTACLES

- We also sampled a couple of Pickwickian items on the pub's menu – I considered going for Mr Winkle's Crispy Chicken Drumettes, and I admit Mr Tupman's 'B.E.S.T' sandwich (containing Bacon, Eggs, Sausage and Tomato) caught my eye too, but in the end I opted for Mr Snodgrass's Chicken Burger while Elaine went for Mr Pickwick's Salad.



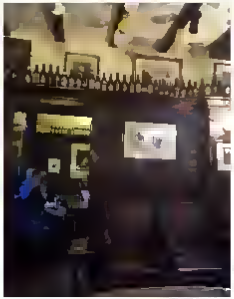
- And the brilliant thing was that the paper placemat for the meal was called *The Pickwick NEWSpapers*. As you can see, this has columnists Nathaniel Winkle on sport, Sam Weller on beer...

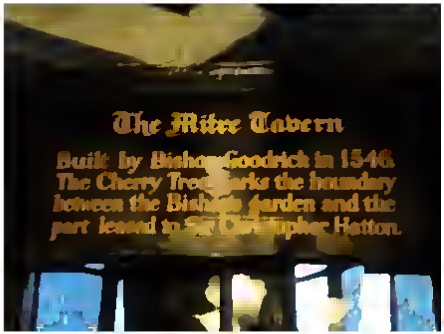
- ...Mr Tupman on pairing food, and Mrs Bardell & Alfred Jingle on "Small talk"!!! And I loved the details at the top of the paper - that Chapman and Hall were the publishers in 1836! Wonderful!!!!
- I thoroughly recommend this pub.

March 8

- In his latest post, Peter Stadlera takes us to a very interesting pub where Dickens and Dr Johnson drank...
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we hear 'singing from the Direction of the Mitre'. A pub with a similar name, Ye Olde Mitre in Hatton Garden, is one of the most difficult pubs to find in London. According to one story, one man worked just around the corner for six years without finding it. But if you *do* find it, it is well worth the effort.

- "It's unashamedly traditional (no TVs), and long may that continue. Previous clientele are rumoured to have included Elizabeth I (one story goes that she danced around a cherry tree that is still there)... Built by Bishop Goodrich of Ely in 1546 to house his London servants, this tiny, secluded pub was leased out to Sir Christopher Hatton. Oak panelled walls and timber beamed ceilings give a real Elizabethan feel





- "A cherry tree marks a boundary and the welcome is as original as when Dr Johnson and Charles Dickens drank there (though not together).

- "The current incarnation was built around 1772, although there has been a pub on the site since the mid 1500s. It is actually technically still part of the Diocese of Ely, Cambridgeshire, a bizarre quirk due to its origins as a tavern for the servants of the Palace of the Bishops of Ely. Its location is Ely Court, Hatton Garden, Holborn, London EC1N 6SJ. Film buffs might recognise the pub, Ye Olde Mitre has been featured in a couple of legendary blockbusters including cult movie *Snatch* and *The Deep Blue Sea*."

March 9

- And so to the fourth stop on our Swiss tour...and now we are in Zurich. The Zurich pub, though, is a bit different because it is actually called Oliver Twist (I don't know why), but it still has Pickwickiana on display.

MR PICKWICK'S
WORLD OF BEER
THE QUEST BEER

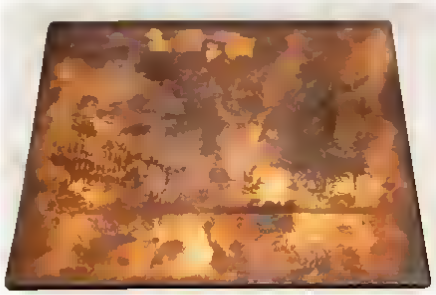
Spin the wheel
Spin the wheel

- In particular, it features another Mr Pickwick robot - see the video below:
- https://www.facebook.com/deathandmrpickwick/videos/vb.512473502219840/807999162667271/?type=2&theater

- I must say that the robot's face is reason enough for visiting this pub. The English language has many ways of expressing inebriation - "Hammered", "Paralytic", "Sloshed", "Blotto" etc etc - but let's just say that the Mr Pickwick robot looks very merry indeed as it surveys the room...

March 9

- The great Peter Stadlera now posts about a printing technique mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick*...
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about a copperplate printer in Castle Street. Copperplate printing, also known as engraved printing, uses a polished copper plate on which a design has been etched or engraved. The fine handwriting that is associated with 18th and 19th century copperplate engravings is often referred to as copperplate. Engraving is the 'pre-press' part of the process; the engraved plate, or die, is then placed in the die-stamping press. Dating from the 16th century, copperplate printing or engraving still creates an image of elegance and distinction and it allows designers to create very high quality printed materials.



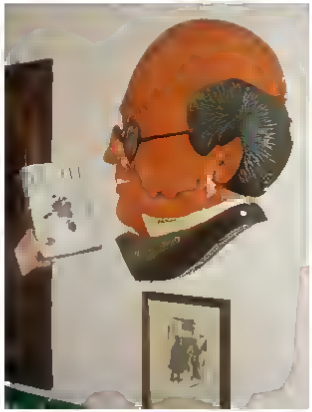
- "Nowadays, engraving is normally achieved through computer typesetting, but hand tooling may still be employed to capture fine detail or rout out larger areas. The plate is then inked and stamped against a sheet of paper at pressures of up to two tons per square inch, causing the image to be transferred to the paper stock.

- "The extreme force used in the copperplate printing process presses the paper deep into the engraved areas of the printing plate, creating an impression on the paper surface. It is this impression that imparts the finished image with its unique, three-dimensional character and tremendous tactile appeal. In addition, because copperplate printing inks are opaque, they produce crisp, well defined images in colours that are exceptionally clear and true. Their opacity also allows the engraving of light-coloured images on darker paper stocks. Here we see a William Blake (1757-1827), copperplate Illustration of the Book of Job, 1825."

March 10

- The great *Death and Mr Pickwick* Amazing Race across Switzerland now reaches Zug.

DEATH
MR PICKWICK

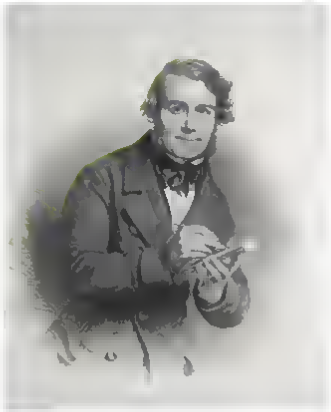


Ye
Magpie
&

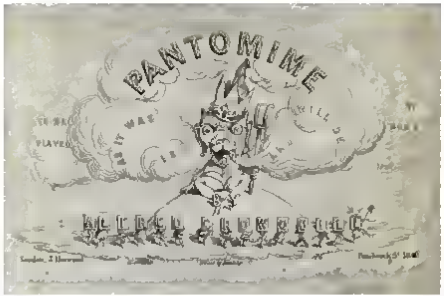
- There was another Mr Pickwick robot too:
- https://www.facebook.com/deathandmrpickwick/videos/vb.512473502219840/808444062622781/?type=2&theater

- And quite simply the most delicious pulled pork sandwich I have ever had!

March 10



- Peter Stadlera now posts about one of the artists who applied for the job of illustrating *Pickwick* after Seymour's death.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Forrester/Crowquill. Let s have a closer look at this fascinating artist. Alfred Henry Forrester (10 September 1804 - 26 May 1872) was an English author, illustrator and artist, who was also known under the pseudonym of Alfred Crowquill. His illustrations were often of a satirical nature. The pseudonym is somewhat odd as it was used jointly by two brothers: Alfred Henry Forrester (1804-72) and his older brother Charles Robert Forrester (1803-50). Alfred specialized in witty sketches for *Comic Arithmetic*, *Punch* and *The Illustrated London News*. By the end of 1843, he had apparently ceased to publish caricatures under this pseudonym, leaving it for the exclusive use of his older brother.



- "His pantomime sketches with humorous verses beneath (as seen in *The Illustroted London News* during the Christmas season of that year and later published in book form in 1826) must have been among his last graphic works placed before the public under that *nom de plu*me.

He promises to mend his friend and bids him use force.

She is very much moved, but won't go on.

The good Fairy appears!

The Devil is in a devil of a stew.

The Prince is stupid and penitent.

The Lover offers up his hat and a thanksgiving.

The Maid does the same thing in her own way.

The Father is changed to Clown and a fool, both of which he runs before.

The Prince turns into Pantaloon.

The great coat flies away again Clouds and the bad man sink into the cellar and the fun begins

He courts a lovely (pantomime) female and steals her three) Pellets!

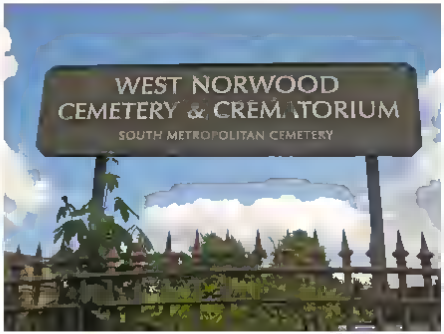
He is shewed by the bat of Harlequin.

He burns himself with a red hot poker this is positively necessary

He treats Pantaloon in the most undignified manner

The Clown makes a desperate Leap to catch the Harlequin and falls of course.
He shows a great contempt for municipal authorities, and receives much applause.
This kind of pantomimic scene is remembered by all the younger inhabitants.

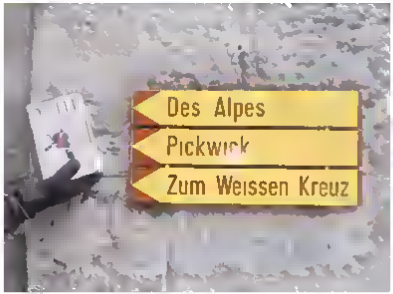
Clown catches the Lovers tripping.
He seizes the magic Bat
Harlequin loses his power
Last Scene. Blue Fire. Happy Lovers. Everybody gets upon everybodies shoulders Curtain falls.



- "Crowquill is buried in West Norwood Cemetery."

March 11

- And so we come to the sixth stop on the *Death and Mr Pickwick* "Amazing Race" across Switzerland.



- The Pickwick pub/hotel at Lucerne has the most beautiful location of any in the Pickwick chain, because it is located beside the Reuss River, and can be reached by crossing the Kapellbrucke (Chapel Bridge), which is the oldest wooden covered bridge in Europe, and the oldest truss bridge in the world.

- There was more Pickwickiana of course - note in particular the Pickwick-logo ashtray which I placed on top of the book when I was sitting outside.

Mr.
Pickwick
the easy going real
English Pub
LUZERN

- A couple of night shots...

- And at the nearby Pfistern Restaurant we indulged ourselves in that most Swiss of dishes, a cheese fondue.
- I will do the final amazing race post tomorrow.

March 11

- In *Death and Mr Pickwick*, William Combe is persuaded to write *Dr Syntax* because the publisher, Ackermann, brings him a gooseberry pie. As I recall, Combe was indeed known to be fond of gooseberry pie - and it struck me as deeply appropriate that the origins of *Pickwick*, a book so concerned with eating and drinking, should be tied up with the desire for food. Well, Peter Stadlera has just done a wonderful post about a town that holds an annual gooseberry pie fair. I had never heard of this fair before - and now I really want to go!

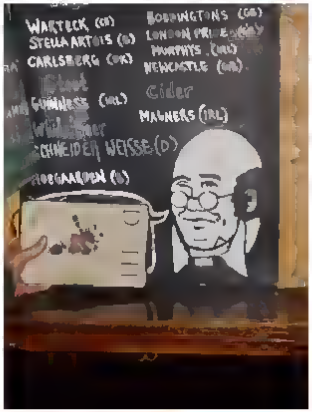
- "In Death and Mr Pickwick we read about gooseberry pie. That made me think about the Gooseberry Pie Fair History of Galmpton The village, in Devon, has a Saxon origin, in around 700AD, and derives its name from the word "Gafolsman," meaning a rent paying peasant The earliest known spelling was Galmetona, which is recorded in the Domesday Book. The old rhyme "In eighteen hundred and seventy three, the people of Galmpton did agree, to hold a Gooseberry Pie Fair" dates the first known Fair, although records suggest that it had been held before then. Why gooseberries? No-one knows, but the Fair was held again 50 years later, in 1923, and then in 1951 for the Festival of Britain celebrations. The Fair then ran annually from about 1968 to 1983, on the Memorial Recreation Field opposite Churston Grammar School. In 1995 the Fair was re-launched as a street fair where it is today, in the heart of Galmpton, taking advantage of the network of roads that can be closed for the event. It is run as an afternoon of fun for the village.

- "Most of the stalls and events, however, are raising money for local charities. At the Annual General Meeting of the Fair Committee any surpluses are donated to local good causes.

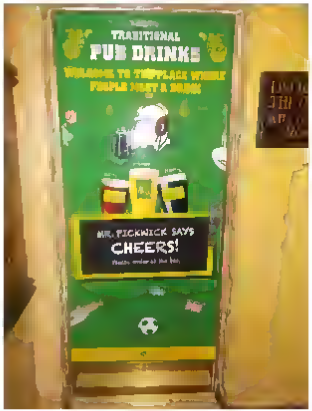
- "In Tollesbury, Essex, there is another gooseberry pie event. The Tollesbury Sailing Club revived 'Gooseberry Pie' festivities on St. Peter's Day, linked with the annual fair. The origin of this Gooseberry Pie event is shrouded in the mists of time, but like so many other feasts and festivities it undoubtedly had a religious significance and connexion, for according to Morant's *History of Essex* (1772) reference is made to 'Tollesbury Gooseberrie Pie Fayre' being held on Saint Peter's Day (29th June - St Peter being the Patron Saint of Fishermen)."

March 12

- And so we come to the seventh and last stop in the *Death and Mr Pickwick* Amazing Race across Switzerland - the Pickwick pub at Basel. As with the others, there was a collection of Pickwickiana and, after we had drunk an excellent pint there, we headed for the city's airport.

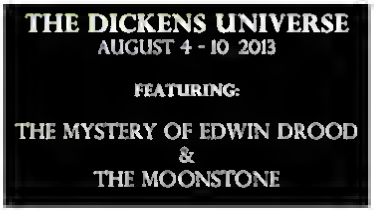

WARTECK (D)
STELLA ARTOIS (B)
CARLSBERG (DK)
BOBBINGTONS (GB)
MURPHYS (IRL)
NEWCASTLE (GB)
GUINNESS (IRL)
Cider
MAGNERS (IRL)
WEISSE (D)

COURT Nº1
BARDELL vs PICKWICK
ITS WAY UNDER JUSTICE PIMM
witnesses this way


TRADITIONAL
PUB DRINKS
MR. PICKWICK SAYS
CHEERS!

- But that wasn't quite the end...because, unbeknownst to me, Elaine had upgraded our flights to Clubworld class, which not only meant a better flight home, but gave access to the airport's lounge, with free booze and food! This was not only a fantastic surprise - it felt like we had won the Amazing Race! Cheers, everyone!

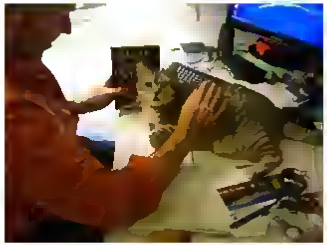
March 13



- I was recently contacted by Professor Monica Bosson, who teaches English at City College of San Francisco, and she has now written this piece about *Death and Mr Pickwick*
- "My dearest friend, and surrogate grandfather, Dr Basil Guy, gave me the *TLS* review of *Death and Mr Pickwick* last year.
- As a Victorianista , and a frequenter of the Dickens Universe at UC Santa Cruz, I was immediately interested It took me a few months to get myself ready to read the novel. I had to prepare myself. I reread *Pickwick*, and then I curled up in bed with *Death and Mr Pickwick* and Dickens' novel over last winter break After many lovely days in bed with the two novels, I got to the end of *Death and Mr Pickwick*
- Oh my! I loved the novel, and you will too. It is a great read for anyone who enjoys Victorian novels and Dickens. It has a great premise The whole back story about Seymour's illustrations and his suicide, spurred by Dickens' taking over of the endeavors, is both chilling and enlightening. Poor Seymour was usurped by Dickens On a side note, I am a big fan of Wilkie Collins He, too, found himself railroaded, pun intended, by Dickens

- "However, I found an error, it was minor, but still an error, in the time frame. The finale of the novel is about Dismal Jemmy's story that was not ever told in the original novel. Early in *Pickwick*, Dismal Jemmy offers to send his second story, the one after the one about the dipsomaniac clown's death, to Mr. Pickwick. The author, Stephen Jarvis, said Dismal Jemmy meets Pickwick the next day, but it was the day AFTER that that they meet on the bridge.
- Since *Death and Mr. Pickwick* is all about the minutia in *Pickwick*, I got in touch with the author. Lo and behold, he actually responded to me in 30 minutes!! How wonderful. He told me I was the first person to notice this errata in the novel. It will be corrected in the paperback version out in May.
- If you are a fan of Victorian fiction or Dickens, you should definitely read this novel. I loved it. I am looking forward to rereading it soon.
- Stephen Jarvis is an amazing story teller!"

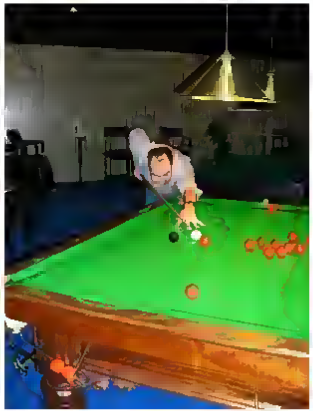
March 13

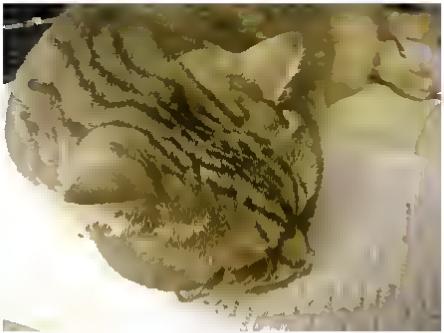


- Here is Peter Stadlera s latest post, showing his amazing enthusiasm for my novel. Greatly appreciated Peter! (And you will LOVE the close-up of Sir Pelzi, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cat! What a strokable head!)
- "Sir Pelzi says there are some parallels between *Death and Mr Pickwick* and snooker's finest moments. Steve Davis managed to score the first televised maximum break (147 points) in 1982. It took him around 8 minutes to perform this highlight. Stephen came up with his superb maximum novel in 2015 and what an achievement and outstanding break it was. masterly devised, precisely potted on every page, full of rhythm, intelligence and thrilling for every minute (I mean page). Steve Davis' double reminds me of all the inset stories within the novel. Unexpected and breathtakingly good. Reading *Death and Mr Pickwick* is like watching the perfect game in snooker. Stephen is a genius at play, I mean at writing, the Wizard of Berkshire

Frames
2
2
STEVE DAVIS
147
JOHN SPENCER
0

- "Alluding to the long break every ambitious Snooker player (like me, my wife or Sir Pelzi) is looking for, we can only recommend *Death and Mr Pickwick* if you want to have a jolly good time!"

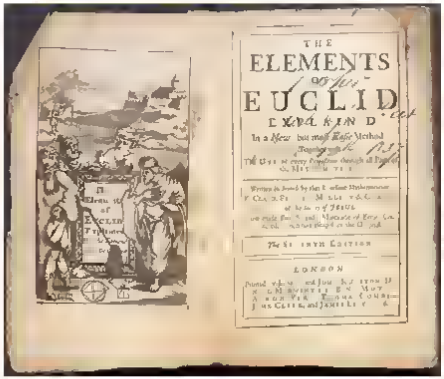




March 14

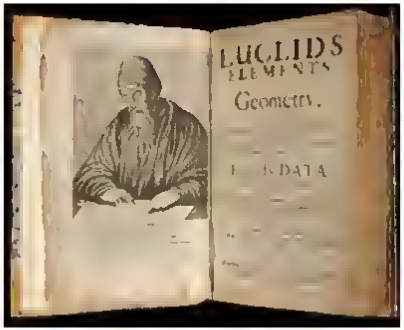
- Towards the end of *Death and Mr Pickwick*, there is a passage which talks about the importance of *The Pickwick Papers* to the soldiers serving in the First World War:
- "1914. I took the king's shilling. Those of us who fought carried *Pickwick* in our kitbags to the barracks and the trenches. Those of us who were wounded read it in the field hospitals. It was the one book, apart from the Bible, that saw service in the Great War. *Pickwick* was the piece of England that an Englishman carried with him into battle."
- The picture in today's post is supporting evidence. It's a piece of First World War 'trench art' - that is to say, a decorative item made by soldiers - showing Mr Pickwick. It's actually a match-holder. Note the striking surface at the bottom. It was probably made from an artillery shell case.

March 14

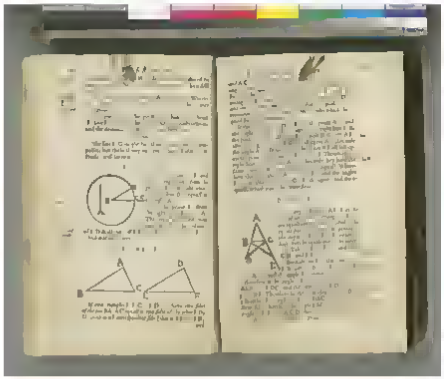

THE
ELEMENTS
OF
EUCLID
EXPLAIN'D
In a New but more Easie Method
LONDON

- Peter Stadlera now posts about the Greek mathematician Euclid, who is mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. Although it is only a brief mention, it is actually far more important than you might think. I was inspired to mention Euclid because of a very important academic paper I read which I believe was called 'Visual Design in *The Pickwick Papers*'. The paper noted that *The Pickwick Papers* seems to be full of circles and straight lines. Mr Pickwick himself is composed of circles - a fat circular body, circular spectacles, circular bald head and circular magnifying glass. But many other things in the book are circular too - rolling carriage wheels and cricket balls, to name just two. There are also straight lines - such as the stumps the cricket ball would hit, and also human straight lines, that is to say the very thin people who appear alongside the fatties. The academic even suggested that this was part of the reason *Pickwick* succeeded - that there was a visual design element to the text, which was inherently appealing.

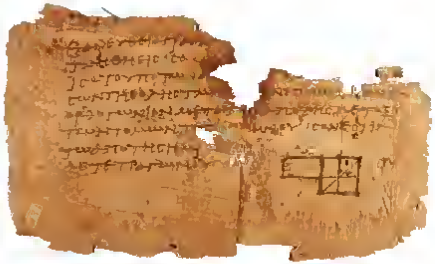
- Indeed, the academic also suggested that Mickey Mouse is similar to Mr Pickwick, when considered as a visual design - if you take Mickey's huge circular ears, shrink them a bit, and move them down, they turn into Mr Pickwick's spectacles. This struck me as a fascinating insight into the novel, and suggested that Dickens's involvement with an artist, Robert Seymour, had created a deep influence upon the text. So, I had Robert Seymour's son think about these matters, and mention Euclid - a man who knew a lot about circles and straight lines himself. Over to Peter:
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read that Euclid wrote his *Elements*. Well, this brings back lessons in maths to us. The *Elements* is the classic treatise in geometry written by Greek mathematician Euclid around 300 BCE and used as a textbook for more than 1000 years in western Europe.



- "Euclid, the 'Father of Geometry', lived and worked in Alexandria, Egypt, during the reign of Ptolemy I. The *Elements* has been described as the most influential textbook ever written. Euclid's *Elements* was especially significant in the development of science during the Renaissance and Enlightenment. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Isaac Newton all used the text in the development of their own work.



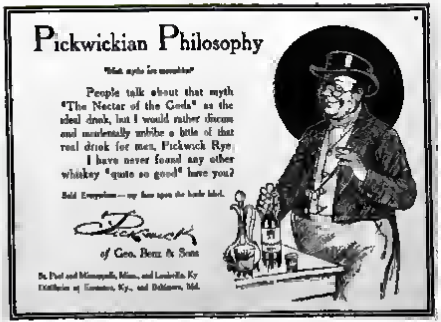
- "Euclid defined both classic geometry and Greek number theory, forming the basis of both logic and much of modern science. While much of the book is based on the work of earlier Greek mathematicians, including Pythagoras and Hippocrates of Chios, Euclid updated or replaced many of their proofs with better ones of his own workings. The book went through more than 2,000 editions, consists of 465 propositions and is divided into 13 'books' (an archaic word for 'chapters'): 1 is on triangles, 2 on rectangles, 3 on circles, 4 on polygons, 5 on proportion, 6 on similarity, 7-10 on number theory, 11 on solid geometry, 12 on pyramids and last and least 13 on Platonic solids. The *Elements* started with 23 definitions, five postulates, and five 'common notions," and systematically built the rest of plane and solid geometry upon this foundation.



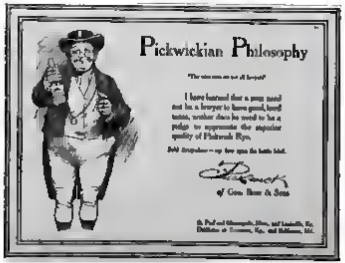
- "The five Euclid postulates are:
- 1. It is possible to draw a straight line from any point to another point.
- 2. It is possible to produce a finite straight line continuously in a straight line.
- 3. It is possible to describe a circle with any center and radius.
- 4. All right angles are equal to one another.
- 5. If a straight line falling on two straight lines makes the interior angles on the same side less than two right angles, the straight lines (if extended indefinitely) meet on the side on which the angles which are less than two right angles lie.

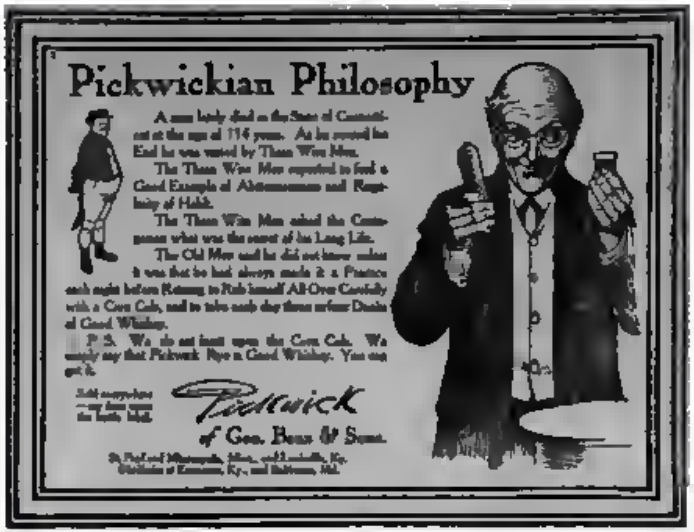
- "Euclid's fifth postulate is known as the parallel postulate. After more than two millennia of study, this postulate was found to be independent of the others. In fact, equally valid non-Euclidean geometries were found to be possible by changing the assumption of this postulate. Unfortunately, Euclid's postulates were not rigorously complete and left a large number of gaps. Hilbert needed a total of 20 postulates to construct a logically complete geometry."

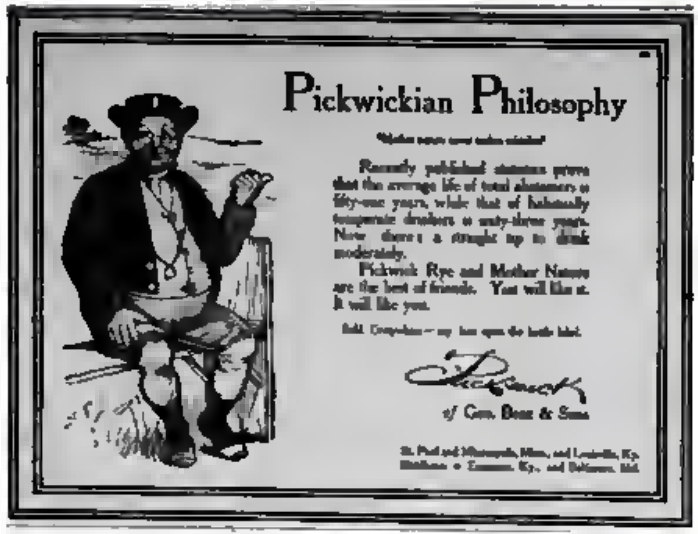
March 15

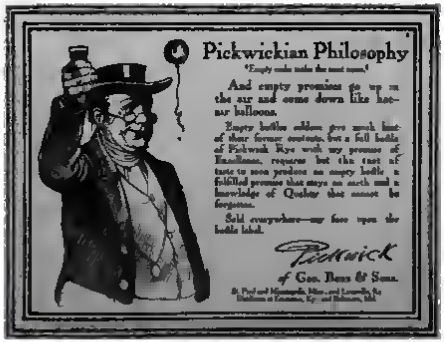


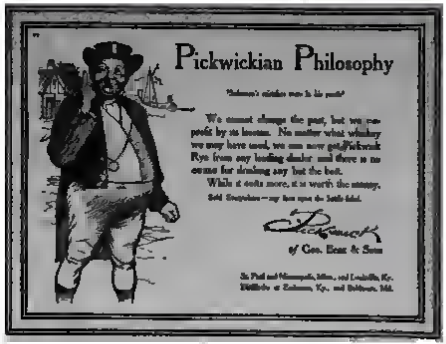
- When I posted about Pickwickian 'boozıana' recently, I included a couple of advertisments for Pickwick Rye, an early twentieth century brand of whiskey I have just discovered that the brand produced quite a lot of advertisements featuring Mr Pickwick, including this series on 'Pickwickian Philosophy ' Rest assured this branch of philosophy has nothing whatsoever to do with Plato and Aristotle!

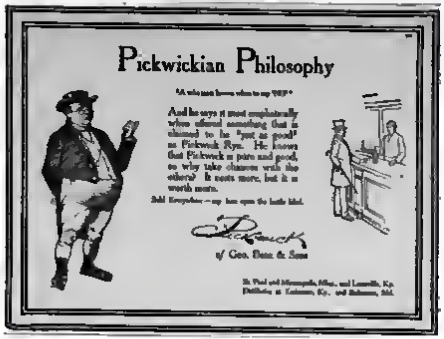


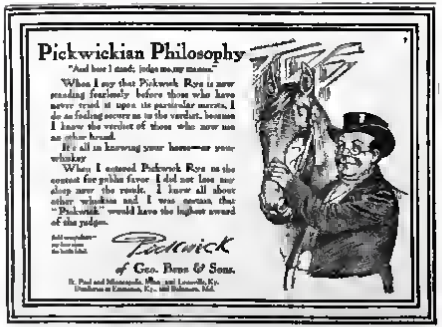

Pickwickian Philosophy
A man lately died in the State of Connecticut at the age of 114 years. At his second bat-End he was visited by Three Wise Men.
The Three Wise Men expected to find a Good Example of Abstemiousness and Regularity of Habit.
The Three Wise Men asked the Centenarian what was the secret of his Long Life.
The Old Man said he did not know unless it was that he had always made it a Practice each night before Retiring to Rub himself All Over Carefully with a Corn Cob, and to take each day three ounces Drachm of Good Whiskey.
P. S. We do not insist upon the Corn Cob. We simply say that Pickwick Rye is Good Whiskey. You can get it.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons.

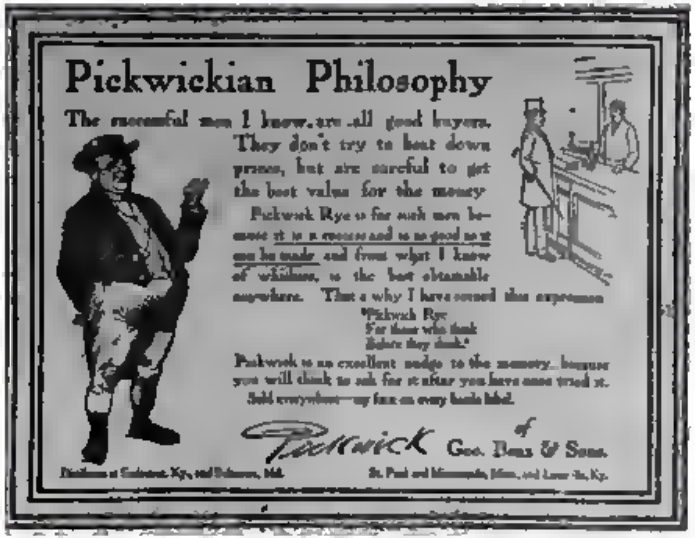

Pickwickian Philosophy
Recently published statistics prove that the average life of total abstainers is fifty-one years, while that of habitually temperate drinkers is sixty-three years. Now there's a straight tip to drink moderately.
Pickwick Rye and Mother Nature are the best of friends. You will like it. It will like you.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons


Pickwickian Philosophy
"Empty cubs make the most noise"
And empty promises go up in the air and come down like hot-air balloons.
Empty bottles seldom give much hint of their former contents, but a full bottle of Pickwick Rye with my promise of Excellence, requires but the test of taste to prove produces an empty bottle a fulfilled promise that stays on earth and a knowledge of Quality that cannot be forgotten.
Sold everywhere—my face upon the bottle label.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons.
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.
Distillers at Evansville, Ind., and Baltimore, Md.

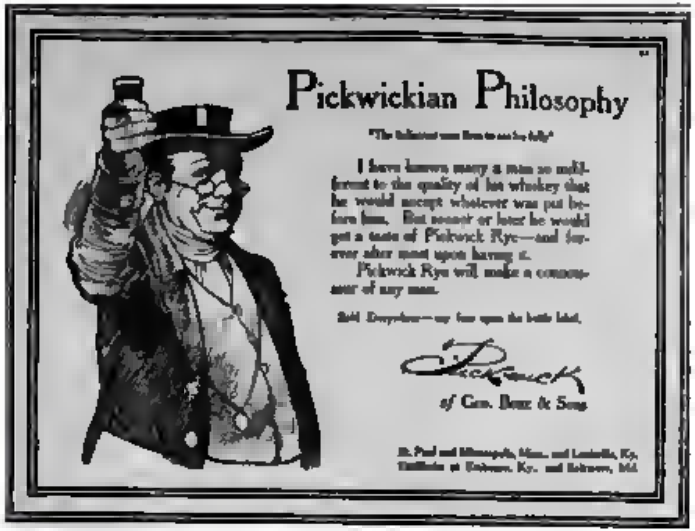

Pickwickian Philosophy
"Solomon's mistake was in his youth"
We cannot change the past, but we can profit by its lessons. No matter what whiskey we may have used, we can now get Pickwick Rye from any leading dealer and there is no excuse for drinking any but the best.
While it costs more, it is worth the money.
Sold Everywhere—my face upon the bottle label.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.
Distillers at Evansville, Ind., and Baltimore, Md.

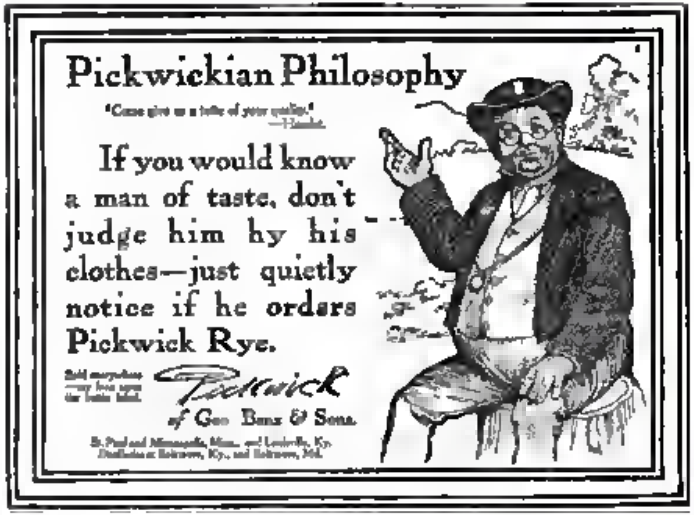

Pickwickian Philosophy
"A wise man knows when to say 'YES'"
And he says it most emphatically when offered something that is claimed to be "just as good" as Pickwick Rye. He knows that Pickwick is pure and good, so why take chances with the others? It costs more, but it is worth more.
Sold Everywhere — say how upon the bottle label.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.
Distilleries at Kenton, Ky., and Baltimore, Md.


Pickwickian Philosophy
"And here I stand; judge me, my masters."
When I say that Pickwick Rye is now standing fearlessly before those who have never tried it upon the particular merits, I do so feeling secure as to the verdict, because I know the verdict of those who now use no other brand.
It's all in knowing your brand—use your whiskey
When I entered Pickwick Rye as the contest for public favor I did not lose my sleep over the result. I knew all about other whiskies and I was certain that "Pickwick" would have the highest award of the judges.
Sold everywhere—say how upon the bottle label.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons.
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.
Distilleries at Kenton, Ky., and Baltimore, Md.

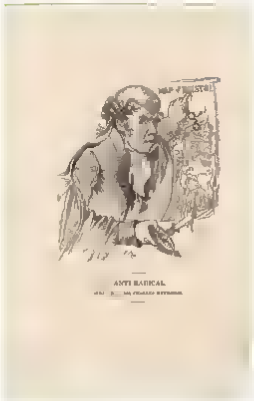

Pickwickian Philosophy
The successful men I know are all good buyers. They don't try to beat down prices, but are careful to get the best value for the money.
Pickwick Rye is far such men because it is a success and is as good as it can be made, and from what I know of whiskies, is the best obtainable anywhere. That's why I have coined the expression
"Pickwick Rye
For those who think
Before they drink."
Pickwick is an excellent nudge to the memory, because you will think to ask for it after you have once tried it.
Sold everywhere—up face on every bottle label.
Pickwick of Geo. Benz & Sons.
Distillers at Cincinnati, Ky., and Baltimore, Md.
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.

Pickwickian Philosophy
"Bless thy five senses."
The Hearing: Because it enables you to listen to the advice of those who have used Pickwick Rye.
The Sight: Because it enables you to recognize the Pickwick label.
The Smell: Because it enables you to recognize Quality in the aroma of Pickwick Rye.
The Taste: Because it enables you to fully appreciate and enjoy the delectable flavor of this King among whiskies—Pickwick Rye.
The Feeling: Because it tones and invigorates the system. Makes you feel good and has no unpleasant reactive effect.
Sold everywhere—up face on every bottle label.
Pickwick of Geo. Benz & Sons.
St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., and Louisville, Ky.
Distillers at Cincinnati, Ky., and Baltimore, Md.


Pickwickian Philosophy
I have known many a man so indifferent to the quality of his whiskey that he would accept whatever was put before him. But sooner or later he would get a taste of Pickwick Rye—and forever after must upon having it.
Pickwick Rye will make a connoisseur of any man.
Pickwick
of Geo. Benz & Sons

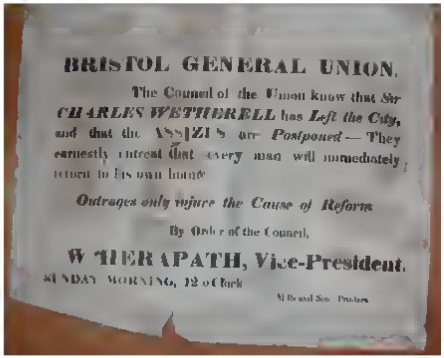

Pickwickian Philosophy
If you would know a man of taste, don't judge him by his clothes—just quietly notice if he orders Pickwick Rye.
Pickwick
of Geo Benz & Sons

March 15



- The riots in Bristol, which spilled over into Bath, and led to the assault on Moses Pickwick's White Hart inn, were largely precipitated by the appearance of one very unpopular politician in the city. Peter Stadlera now tells us more about that man.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we meet Sir Charles Wetherell, hear about the Bristol riots and that Mansion House was looted... Sir Charles Wetherell (1770-1846), politician and lawyer, third son of Nathan Wetherell (1726-1807), dean of Hereford and master of University College, Oxford. He practised in the first instance at the common-law bar, joining the home circuit and Surrey sessions, but he devoted himself to equity business shortly after Eldon first became lord chancellor, being something of a favourite with him for the sake of his father and his college.

- "During the next twenty years Wetherell (shown left) enjoyed an important practice, and frequently appeared not only in the courts of chancery, but before the privy council, the House of Lords, and parliamentary committees. He was appointed a king's counsel in 1816, but when his patent expired on the death of George III he resumed his stuff gown for some little time before it was renewed. He was elected a bencher of his inn in 1816, and in 1825 was treasurer. In the House of Commons he was prominent but not influential, often effective in debate but pedantic and bigoted, slovenly in his dress, and somewhat of a buffoon. He regularly and vehemently defended Lord Eldon and the existing practice of the courts of chancery against all criticism or proposals for reform, and even Brougham's bankruptcy bill in 1831 he fought relentlessly.



- "He was equally uncompromising in resisting Roman catholic emancipation and parliamentary, municipal, and university reform. It was difficult for the government to overlook the claims of so active a debater, and at last, on 31 January 1824, he was appointed solicitor-general, and was knighted on 10 March 1824. He became a bitter opponent alike of the Wellington and of the Whig administrations. During the reform debates he was one of the most conspicuous opponents of the ministry, and spoke often and long in support of the existing franchise and representation. So much was he identified in the popular imagination with extreme and even fanatical opposition to reform that it was his appearance in Bristol which provoked the riots of 1831. He had succeeded Gifford in the recordership of Bristol, and proceeded on 29 October 1831 to open the assizes, in spite of warnings that his appearance would provoke disturbances. These warnings he simply reported to the home secretary, intimating his intention to carry out his duty in the ordinary way, whatever the risk to himself, and leaving the government to take precautions to protect the public peace. He was mobbed, hooted, and stoned, and with some difficulty made his escape from Bristol by night, and after considerable risk of losing his life. For three days Bristol was in the hands of a riotous mob, and a considerable part of the town was burnt

- "Wetherell returned to practice for some years, and remained recorder of Bristol till his death.
- He married, 28 December 1826, his cousin Jane Sarah Elizabeth, second daughter of Sir Alexander Croke. She died in 1831, and in 1838 he married Harriet Elizabeth, second daughter of Colonel Warneford, of Warneford Place, Wiltshire. There was no surviving issue of either marriage. Wetherell, who had inherited a considerable fortune on his father's death in 1807, accumulated a very large one himself.
- On 10 August 1846 he received injuries in a carriage accident which proved fatal on the 17th, and he was buried in the Temple church on the 25th.
- He died intestate, leaving upwards of £200,000 and a great deal of landed property.
- A statue of him was erected at Clifton in 1839.

- "Wetherell's reputation has suffered by the indiscretion and violence of his speeches as an ultra tory and protestant champion from 1826 to 1832. He is probably now best remembered for the accusation that he was drunk, and 'the only lucid interval was that between his waistcoat and his breeches.' Yet his political conduct generally was fair and honourable, and at the bar he was always considered a man of scrupulous bearing and honour."

March 16

- There are several references to sperm whale oil in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. On one occasion, a coachman finds a bottle with a little sperm oil in the boot of his coach, and he says "Ah, if a bottle of oil could speak about its life, this one could tell some tales, I'll bet" - which is a Pickwickian in-joke, because in the *Pickwick Advertiser*, the leaflet of advertisements sewn into the serial parts of *Pickwick*, there is actually an advertisement-cum-tale in which a bottle tells its autobiography. On another occasion, Hablot Browne refers to his uncle paying for his indentures - and this contains a hidden allusion to whaling, because his uncle was Elhanan Bicknell, who made his money in the whaling trade. And when Thomas Clarke is told the tale of Chunee in the menagerie, he hears of another exhibit in the menagerie, a sixty-foot sperm whale skeleton. All of which provides an introduction to today's first photo - which shows Mr Pickwick engraved on to a sperm whale tooth, an example of the art of scrimshaw, the carving or etching of bone or ivory.

- But of course, if you are going to light a sperm-oil lamp, some matches would be handy. I have posted about Pickwickian matchbooks before, but are there Pickwickian matchboxes too? Indeed there are. Including a peculiar one which does not show Mr Pickwick, but makes a pun upon his name.

MADE IN
U.S.A.
PICKWICK
BRAND
SAFETY MATCH
DISTRIBUTED BY
KANSAS CITY WHO. GRO CO
KANSAS CITY, MO

PICKQUICK MATCHES
MADE IN SWEDEN
SWEDISH SAFETY MATCHES

March 16

- Peter Stadlera's latest post, about the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, might seem, at first sight, to be a historical post - and, of course, it is - but to me it brings back memories of uncovering the fraud which Dickens and his associates perpetrated to airbrush Robert Seymour out of history. I can remember how I tried to find evidence of the existence of John Foster of Richmond, the supposed original of Mr Pickwick, by looking in the database of the Prerogative Court to see if I could find his will. At first, I thought I had done so - 'That HAS to be him!' I thought, when I saw a John Foster of Richmond, of the right period, in the database...but no, this was a John Foster of Richmond, Virginia, USA, whose will happened to be proved in England. And of course, there was no evidence of a will belonging to John Foster of Richmond, Surrey, UK, for the simple reason that he did not exist.

- Dickens and his associates could never have conceived that computer technology would one day allow someone to search records in an instant, and thereby uncover their fraud. You will recall that, on the Dickens Blog, I was accused of being a "hate-driven conspiracy theorist" and "inept". It really borders on the disgusting that such assertions are made - which in essence, try to extend Dickens's fraud into the twenty-first century. Is it any wonder that I strongly suspect that Dickensians deliberately suppressed the huge amount of evidence about Seymour which mysteriously vanished in the 1920s? Anyway, over to Peter.

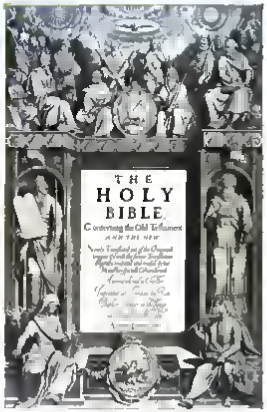
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. The Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) was a church court under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was responsible for the probate of wills and trials of testamentary causes where the value of the goods involved was greater than five pounds, and the property was held in two (or more) dioceses within Great Britain. While wills might also be proven at York, Canterbury's jurisdiction covered Southern England (including London) and Wales. Its archive also contains large numbers of wills relating to individuals who died abroad, but who owned property in Britain. In the period between 1680 and 1820 the Court proved on average 3,700 wills a year, including large numbers of Irish and colonial wills, and those of soldiers and sailors who died while in service."

March 17

- The section of *Death and Mr Pickwick* dealing with Dickens's love for Maria Beadnell was one I really enjoyed writing. I felt it added to the 'vastness' of *Death and Mr Pickwick*. And, in a sense, it 'completed the catalogue'. The book covers a huge range of nineteenth-century society, from the highest tiers to the lowest; it touches upon many human themes - art, madness, war, imprisonment and much more besides. But without a section dealing with intense, passionate, and obsessive love, there was something missing. I also considered including a section dealing with Maria's later regrets at turning down Dickens - as Dickens's fame grew, it seems that Maria hit the bottle. I discovered some interesting material about this in a scrapbook in the Dickens Museum, in which a former servant told of Maria's response to Dickens's colossal success. However, as I have said on many occasions, I had to make cuts in the manuscript, and so I dropped this part.

- But this post also gives me an opportunity to pass on an anecdote told to me by Dickens's descendant Mark Dickens, the current designated 'Head' of the Dickens family. Mark used to serve in the Royal Navy on a submarine. Anyway, at meals he started chatting to another submariner, and the two became quite good friends. There came a point where Mark revealed that his surname was Dickens, and then of course he admitted that he was a descendant of THE Dickens. There was a shock, though, when the other submariner revealed who HIS ancestor was. None other than Maria Beadnell herself!

March 17



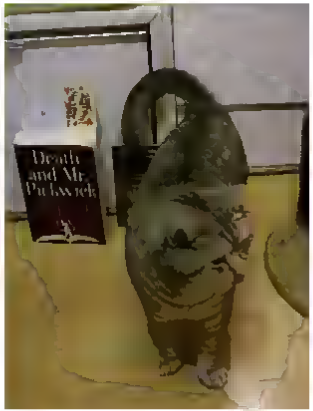
- Here is Peter Stadlera on the King James Bible, which is mentioned in *Death and Mr Pickwick* because, as Peter says, it was put together by a committee, and there were rumours that the same was the case with *The Pickwick Papers*. And great to see the Bible with *Death and Mr Pickwick* fan Dr Rowan Williams!
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we come across the King James Bible. This is an English translation of the Christian Bible for the Church of England that began in 1604 and was completed in 1611. First printed by the King's Printer Robert Barker, this was the third translation into English to be approved by the English Church authorities.

- "The first was the Great Bible commissioned in the reign of King Henry VIII (1535), and the second was the Bishops Bible of 1568 In January 1604, James I convened the Hampton Court Conference where a new English version was conceived in response to the perceived problems of the earlier translations as detected by the Puritans, a faction within the Church of England The translation is widely considered a towering achievement in English literature, as both beautiful and scholarly James gave the translators instructions intended to guarantee that the new version would conform to the ecclesiology and reflect the episcopal structure of the Church of England and its belief in an ordained clergy. The translation was done by 47 scholars, all of whom were members of the Church of England. In common with most other translations of the period, the New Testament was translated from Greek, the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew and Aramaic, while the Apocrypha was translated from Greek and Latin.

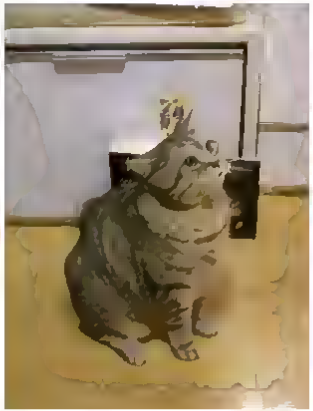
- "In the Book of Common Prayer (1662), the text of the Authorized Version replaced the text of the Great Bible for Epistle and Gospel readings (but not for the Psalter which has retained substantially Coverdale's Great Bible version) and as such was authorized by Act of Parliament. By the first half of the 18th century, the Authorized Version had become effectively unchallenged as the English translation used in Anglican and English Protestant churches, other than for the Psalms and some short passages in the Book of Common Prayer. Over the course of the 18th century, the Authorized Version supplanted the Latin Vulgate as the standard version of scripture for English-speaking scholars. With the development of stereotype printing at the beginning of the 19th century, this version of the Bible became the most widely printed book in history – almost all such printings presenting the standard text of 1769 extensively re-edited by Benjamin Blayney at Oxford, and nearly always omitting the books of the Apocrypha. Today the unqualified title 'King James Version' commonly identifies this Oxford standard text.

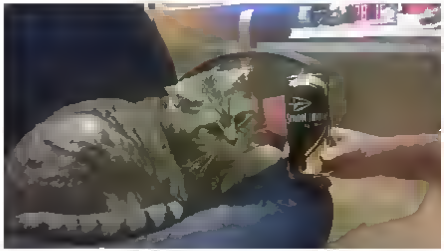
- "Here we see Rowan Williams (the former Archbishop of Canterbury who has chosen *Death and Mr Pickwick* as book of the year), with the 400-year-old King James Bible in Lambeth Palace library."

March 17



- Today is the birthday of Sir Pelzi, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cat! I hope that all DaMP fans will join me in saying: "Happy birthday, Sir Pelzi!"
- "+++ Newsflash
  It's time to play the music
  It's time to light the lights
  It's time to meet Sir Pelzi on his birthday tonight
  He's the most sensational, inspirational, celebrational, literary Pickwickian cat...
  HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR SIR PELZI!!!!"





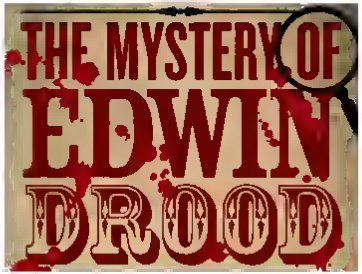
- Peter Stadlera: “Cheers to all! Sir Pelzi is in a very festive mood, with his favourite cider, which he just ordered from me. Well, Sir Pelzi, please drink reasonably!”

March 18

- The tragic death of rock keyboardist Keith Emerson last week brought back memories of my teenage years, and in particular of the Emerson, Lake and Palmer album *Brain Salad Surgery*. I can remember eagerly buying a special issue of *The New Musical Express* which included a floppy 45rpm of the title track as a free gift in advance of the album's release. And there is indeed a tenuous connection between *Brain Salad Surgery* and *Death and Mr Pickwick* - because the cover art represented my first exposure to the work of H R Giger, who would later find fame as the designer of the *Alien* movies, which are mentioned in one of the modern-day sections of my novel.

- And Emerson's suicide, via a gunshot, of course reminded me of Seymour's death. Seymour shot a fowling-gun at his heart; but it was my brother - who is very interested in firearms - who pointed out to me a problem with such a method: the human arm is not long enough to reach the trigger if the muzzle is aimed at the chest. So how did Seymour do it? Judging from various books about Dickens, it would seem that some Dickensians have noted this problem too - and their response has been to fabricate a solution. Thus, one finds statements to the effect that Seymour attached a string to the trigger. The problem is that there is no evidence at all of such a string - certainly, no string was mentioned at the inquest.

- The person who solved the mystery of Seymour's suicide was the American Samuel Lambert, in a little-known paper called *The Mystery of Robert Seymour*. As you will recall, in the 1920s, Lambert came to the UK to investigate Seymour, and he found that the Dickens Fellowship was most unwilling to talk to him. However, Lambert obviously continued to think about Seymour, because in his paper, published in 1939, he provided the solution to the suicide's mystery: Seymour must have prodded the trigger with the ramrod - and it was indeed mentioned at the inquest that the ramrod was found beside Seymour's body.



- Lambert also used a statement in his paper, which I have sometimes used myself, in speeches: Charles Dickens left behind two mysteries when he died - the mystery of the ending to his unfinished novel *Edwin Drood*, and the mystery of Robert Seymour. Dickensians have devoted an awful lot of time to *Edwin Drood*, but so little time to Robert Seymour that they have not even bothered finding out whereabouts, on his body, he aimed the gun - because, quite often, alongside the fabrication about the string, you will find a statement to the effect that Seymour shot himself in the head. Wrong again, I'm afraid, my dear Dickensians.

March 19

- In the trial scene in *The Pickwick Papers*, Buzfuz tries to paint Mr Pickwick as a sexual predator, and he finds salacious content in the phrase "chops and tomata sauce", which appeared in a letter Mr Pickwick wrote to his landlady, Mrs Bardell. I suppose it is inevitable that the colossal fame of the trial scene would, at some point, lead a food company to market a Pickwick brand of tomatoes – and sure enough, that happened in the early twentieth century, in Kansas City

- But also, nowadays, a store in Greenville, South Carolina, The Pickwick Pharmacy and Soda Fountain, holds an annual Tomato Pie Contest. They say "Many people ask the question – isn't a tomato pie just a pizza? The answer is no. A tomato pie is a southern tradition which many southerners may remember from summer vacations in the Carolinas. It's a savory, not sweet, pie filled with fresh tomatoes, basil and special filling. We hear that the secret is in your choice of tomato."
- You can find recipes for tomato pie online. Would any DaMP fan like to try baking a tomato pie, and sending me photos of their cooking and eating exploits?

March 19

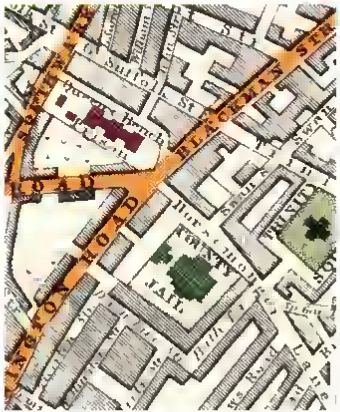
The 'Golden Cross' in the Nineteenth Century

- Here is Peter Stadlera's latest post. I have been to the Halfway to Heaven pub, shown in his second photo. They put on cabaret, featuring drag acts.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Golden Cross Inn in Duncannon Street. Well, let's go to that pub. The address is at Cross Lane in the 1854 licence transfer. It was renamed the Duncannon, 3 Duncannon Street, by 1899. The site was redeveloped as Golden Cross House in 1931, but a pub, of much more modest size, was retained - called the Duncannon.

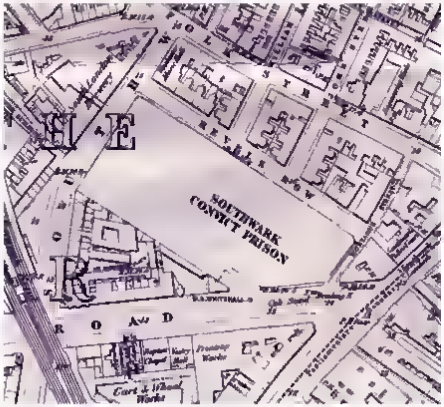
Golden Cross 3 Duncannon Street WC2 - in April 2008

- "In 1991 it was renamed Halfway II Heaven. Oh by the way, that's not my car parked outside, but it is very similar looking to my car. At first glance I thought, wow, I was lucky to get a parking lot directly in front of the Halfway."

March 20



- Peter Stadlera now writes about the prison where Thomas Clarke, the man imprisoned for debt in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, spent his last days. I like the fact that there is still a 'relic' of the prison, in the street sign 'King's Bench Walk'. Peter's posts show the huge potential that *Death and Mr Pickwick* has for suggesting historical outings.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Queen's Prison and wonder where this prison might have been and what was it all about. The Queen's Bench Prison started in Southwark during the sixteenth century as the King's Bench Prison, and was primarily for debtors.



- "By 1653, the prison held nearly 400 inmates in its Borough High Street location. In 1755-8 the prison was moved to a nearby site.

- "A local riot in 1780 resulted in the prison being burned, but it was quickly rebuilt.

- "During the 1840's the prison was amalgamated at its original Borough Road site with two others and renamed Queens Bench. It remained primarily a debtors prison until the middle years of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), when arrest for debt was abolished. By 1872, Queen's Bench had been renamed Southwark Convict Prison. It was finally demolished in 1880. The prison is identified as Queen's Bench in the 1859 map. It was also presented as such in Davies' map of 1843 and Stanford's map of 1862."

March 21

- Today, Peter Stadlera's piece about The Fleet Prison mentions the Fleet river, from which the prison takes its name…and by coincidence I went in search of the source of this over the weekend, as you will see.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about many prisons. In today's post we'll take a look at the Fleet Prison. This was a historic London prison, dating back at least to William the Conqueror and Norman days. It was named after the Fleet river, a tributary of the Thames.

THE FLEET PRISON

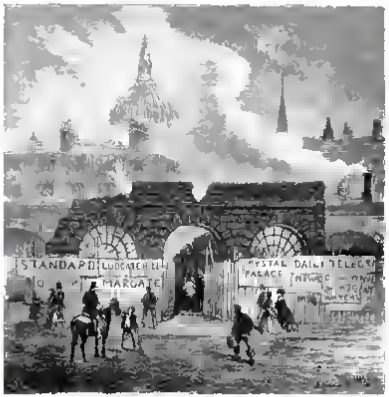
- "The Fleet Prison was situated on the east side of Farringdon Street. Prisoners there were those adjudged guilty by the Court of Star Chamber, which 'exercised unlimited authority, and inflicted heavier punishments than by any law were warranted.' Originally, it was chiefly a 'house of detention' for debtors, and those who had committed misdemeanours, but later it also came to house those found guilty of contempt of court and other offenses. In the early sixteenth century, the Fleet was a popular place to send anyone deemed troublesome by the lords of the Council. In fact, the Articles of Impeachment against Cardinal Wolsey recount many cases where he sent people to the Fleet without any due process.

COURTYARD IN THE FLEET PRISON

- "The Fleet was also convenient for housing political prisoners and religious dissidents. In 1553, John Hooper and Miles Coverdale appeared before the Privy Council, and Hooper was sent to the Fleet for dissent; Coverdale left for the continent, and published the first English Bible. Hooper's description of his imprisonment was recorded by John Foxe in his *Book of Martyrs*. Even in Queen Elizabeth's time, the Fleet housed religious prisoners, and by then prisoners were also sent to the Fleet by the courts of Chancery, Common Pleas, and Exchequer. The lodgings by modern standards would be considered terrible, but the Fleet Prison was better than many others, for example Newgate Gaol.

- "However, even in the reign of Edward III, in 1355, an inquest was held into the conditions, the stream running near the prison was polluted by public latrines and waste to the point that the stench was unbearable, and infectious diseases were likely to sicken the prisoners. By 1381, and the Peasants' Revolt, the Fleet had already gained enough of a vile name for Wat Tyler's men to rush the prison, ransack its stores of food, and burn down many of the buildings in the Liberty of the Fleet. In the reign of King Henry VIII, the poet Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, described the Fleet as a 'noisome prison, whose pestilent airs are not unlike to bring some alteration of health ' All prisoners had to pay fees for their lodgings and for favourable treatment. The wardens of the Fleet were notorious for charging exorbitantly high sums and abusing their posts. The first record of such abuses is from the reign of Henry IV in 1400. For minor offenders (and the noble and influential) in the Fleet, there existed the possibility of bail, which meant that prisoners, for a certain sum, could reside within the Liberties of the Fleet, mansion houses near the prison. Here too, money could buy a certain amount of freedom, alas, for the debtors, such possibilities were few.

- "Of ill treatment, or 'tyranny', by the wardens, records are many. The abuses included 'squeezing' of prisoners, physical violence, sexual molestation, theft, endangerment by putting two prisoners hostile to each other in the same cell, and so on. Upon entry to the prison, an additional fee was charged not to put the prisoner in chains; the most unfortunate souls were put in the cellars, called sarcastically by the prisoners, 'Bartholomew Fair', subterranean dungeons where perishing from illness was almost guaranteed. The conditions were deplorable; when ill-treated prisoners died, their deaths were chalked up to 'jail-fever.'



THE LAST REMAINS OF THE FLEET PRISON

- "The famous personages imprisoned within the Fleet included Bishop Stephen Gardiner; Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London, for refusing to take the oath of supremacy to King Edward VI; William Herbert, the 3rd Earl of Pembroke, patron of Shakespeare, for seducing one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honour; Henry Wriothesley, the 3rd Earl of Southampton, one of Queen Elizabeth's favourites, for marrying without her permission; Ben Jonson for his part in writing the play *The Isle of Dogs*, considered seditious; Sir Walter Raleigh, imprisoned for treason, who was moved there briefly from the Tower to escape an outbreak of the plague; John Donne after his secret marriage to Anne More; the playwright William Wycherley for debt; William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, for refusing to pay an artificially inflated debt to his steward; and Daniel Defoe for bankruptcy; the list is neverending.

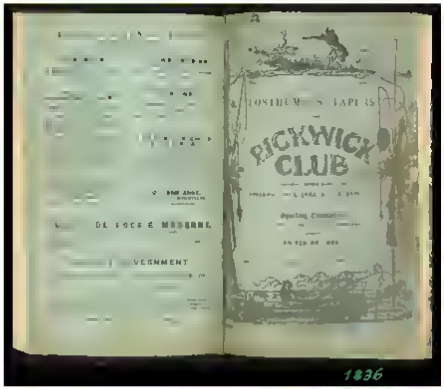
- "The Fleet was burned to the ground in the Great Fire of London in 1666. It was rebuilt very much like it had been, only to be destroyed in the Gordon Riots in 1780, and was again rebuilt. After several inquiries into the conditions of the prison, it was closed by an act of Parliament, in 1842, in Queen Victoria's reign. In 1844 the prison was sold to the Corporation of the City of London, who had the prison demolished shortly after."

March 21

- Peter Stadlera has just posted about the Fleet Prison and, by coincidence, over the weekend my friend Alex Joanides took me to see the source of the Fleet River! He actually showed me two sources, of different tributaries of the Fleet - the first photo shows the Vale of Health, in Hampstead.

- And the second shows the Highgate source...which admittedly was just a patch of mud when we arrived, but Alex assured me that it does sometimes flow with water!

March 22



- On March 31st, it will be the 180th anniversary of the day Mr Pickwick entered the world, with the publication of the first serial part of *The Pickwick Papers*. To mark the anniversary, I thought I would do a countdown of images between now and the 31st, with every image referring to a single year between 1836 and 2016. Today, there are images from 1836 to 1870, the year that Dickens died. Some of the images will refer to *Death and Mr Pickwick*, rather than *The Pickwick Papers* - and so, for instance, in today's set, you will see pictures concerning Lord Melbourne, Pierce Egan, and Charles Whitehead - but all will serve to mark 'The *Pickwick* Years'. You will see not only portrayals of Pickwickian characters, but also clippings from newspapers, and examples of how the popularity of *The Pickwick Papers* led to many things being called Pickwick.

PART I. PRICE 3d
THE FIRST
PICKWICK
CHRISTOPHER TOMKINS ESQ
EDITED BY BOZ

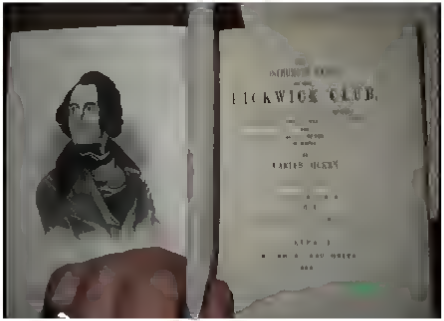
1838
THE PICKWICKIANS
CHAS. F. HAUSMAN

913a 1840

Proofs

Proofs numbers 2 and 3 were present at the 100 at the Tate sale. A further pair and ink sketch of design number 1 exists in a UK collection which may be quite simply an artist's reproduction as photocopiers the original artwork. A set of six are described as being in a private collection according to the PGA of March 1972.

1841
PAPERS.


LICKWICK CLUB.

Die
nachgelassenen Papiere
des
Pickwick-Clubs,
[illegible]
einer getreuen Sammlung der Protokollauszüge, Gedichte, Scherz- und Liebesbriefe, Skizzen und [illegible] Erzählungen der correspondirenden Mitglieder
von
Boz (Charles Dickens).

1843

Aus dem Englischen
von
[illegible].

[illegible]

Wien, 1843.
[illegible]

A NEW GAME,
Which goes ahead of all that has preceded it.
THE PICKWICK CARDS, 1844
INVENTED BY SAMUEL WELLER,
For the entertainment of his friends,
OLD AND YOUNG.
With directions for playing with them three different games.
Price 50 cents. This day published by
n18 eod2w* C. S. FRANCIS & CO. 252 Broadway.

GREENWICH SOCIETY

FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

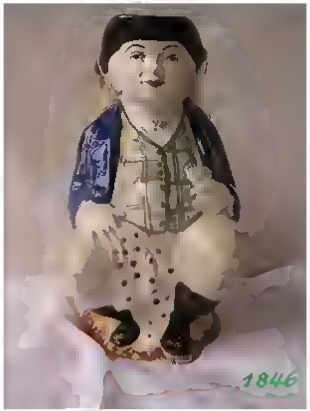
SYLLABUS OF LECTURES FROM JULY TO DECEMBER, 1845.

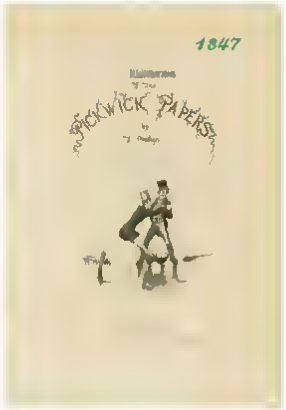
ON THE MORAL TONE AND GENIAL HUMOR OF THE WRITINGS OF BOZ,

By W. H. J. TRAICE, Esq., 1845

Secretary to the Westminster Literary Institution.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2.—Boz compared to Wordsworth and Crabbe—to Hogarth and Wilkie.—Boz's thorough acquaintance with London life: its "lights and shadows."—Meditations in Monmouth Street.—The Pickwick Club—Inauguration of its correresponding branch—Forensic mode of electing and dealing with "cads as exemplified in "Bardell v. Pickwick."—Boz's sympathy with the sad objects of petty tyranny, "the small servant."—Patrician pastimes—Lord Mutanhed.—Hackneied and anomalous use of the word "principle" illustrated in Tom Waller's crumpet story, &c. &c. &c.




1847
PICKWICK PAPERS

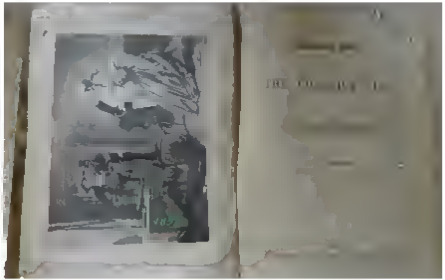
Lord Melbourne
1779–1848
1848
L. G. MITCHELL

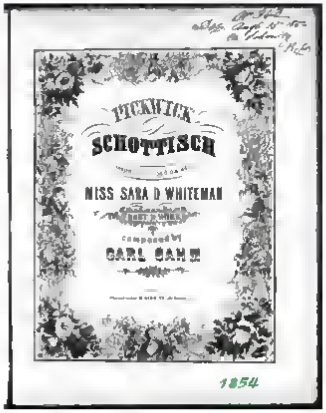
Pierce Egan, the Elder

British writer

Born
1772
London, England

Died
August 3, 1849
London, England





1852

[illegible] T[illegible] P. F. K[illegible] [illegible] ...ighty
[illegible] ...5[illegible] [illegible] aquatint
[illegible] [illegible] was sailing
[illegible] also but disappears from record after 1853. It is possible that she was
w[illegible] was so beaten up by the Cape Horn passage that she might well have been
[illegible] ry and sold locally once she made port in Chile. We are grateful to Michael
Na[illegible]s

PICKWICK
SCHOTTISCH
[illegible]
MISS SARA D WHITEMAN
[illegible]
Composed by
CARL SAHM
[illegible]

1854

The Pickwickian (NY, 1856)

Publication

Frequency

Volume

Size and Format: 8 pages; roughly 8 x 14

Editor/Publisher: Properties (sic) Daughter Julius S Pickwick.

Title Changes and Continuation: Unknown

General Description and Notes:

Our Motto is FUN. A journal of a New York City [illegible] association containing a hand-drawn masthead and is hand illustrated with satirical cartoons. In good condition and very legible.

Contained in the Hook and Ladder Company Record Books in the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland, which included the company's own handwritten newspaper the *Fiery Gazette* since 1854.

Information Sources:

1856

Bibliography: None

Locations: The Hook and Ladder Company Record Books Collection (MS 662), Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, MD

The Handwritten Newspapers Project

1858

"Pair Vignettes.
—Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club.
—Yard of the Bull Inn Whitechapel." (Chap. XXII.)
—Mr Pickwick setting out for Ipswich by Tony Walker's coach."
These vignettes were used on the title-pages of the "Library Edition" 1858.

KARSTENDIEK & CO.

KARSTENDIEK & CO.,

1860

IMPORTERS

—OF—

WINES, LIQUORS, TOBACCOS AND CIGARS

—Offer for sale—

TO THE CITY AND COUNTRY TRADE,

ON THE MOST FAVORABLE TERMS,

Chewing Tobacco.

Plug Tobacco.

1861

Contributors

Australian Dictionary of Biography

Libraries Australia

Whitehead, Charles (1804-1862)

Field of activity

Libraries Australia

NLA Persistent Identifier

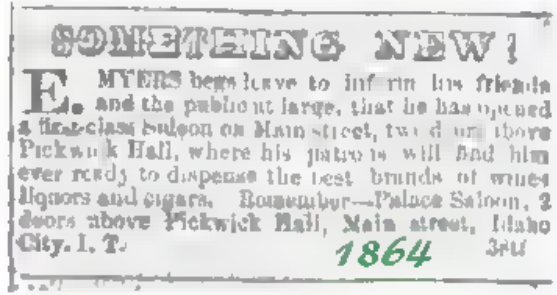
Novels

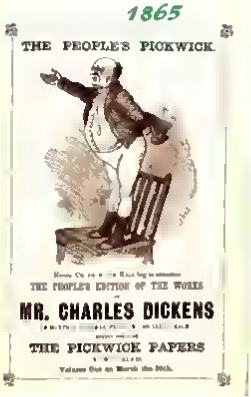
Biographies

Australian Dictionary of Biography

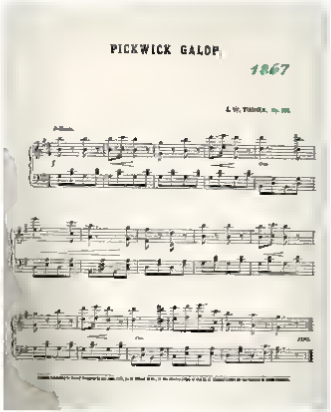
1862

Ambassade
39 rue du
JEUDI
d'Angleterre
Faubg St Honoré
JANVIER 1863
M CHARLES DICKENS LECTURE
of his
LITTLE DORRIT
and
THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK
for the benefit
OF THE BRITISH CHARITABLE FUND
SOIREE DE LECTURE
donnée par
CHARLES DICKENS
au profit
DE LA SOCIETE DE BIENFAISANCE ANGLAISE
et des Ouvriers du Lancashire
SEAT N° ROW N° 12
STALLE N° RANG N° 12
10 FRANCS.
1863


SOMETHING NEW!
E. MYERS begs leave to inform his friends and the public at large, that he has opened a first-class Saloon on Main street, two doors above Pickwick Hall, where his patrons will find him ever ready to dispense the best brands of wines liquors and cigars. Remember—Palace Saloon, 2 doors above Pickwick Hall, Main street, Idaho City, I. T.
1864


1865
THE PEOPLE'S PICKWICK
THE PEOPLE'S EDITION OF THE WORKS
MR. CHARLES DICKENS
THE PICKWICK PAPERS

1866


PICKWICK GALOP.
1867

DICKENS
GREAT HUMOROUS SENSATION
PICKWICK
PAPERS
To be seen
every evening
for fifty Cents
Good Music
ROB SAWYERS
PARTY
ADMISSION
1868

NOTTINGHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTION

MR.

CHARLES DICKENS

FOR

ONE FAREWELL READING

THE ONLY READING THAT MR. DICKENS WILL EVER GIVE IN NOTTINGHAM

ON

THURSDAY EVENING, FEB 4th, 1869,

1869

DOCTOR MARIGOLD,

AND THE

TRIAL FROM PICWICK.

The Reading will commence at Eight o'Clock, and be completed within Two Hours.

The Audience is earnestly requested to be seated Ten Minutes before the commencement of the Reading.

BALCONY STALLS 7s.
(UNRESERVED SEATS.)

RESERVED SEATS OF FLOOR, 5s.
(UNRESERVED, 3s.

Tickets may be obtained of Mr. H. FARMER, at his Music Warehouse, High Street, where the Plan of the Room may be seen and Places secured.

March 22

- Ramsgate features in *Death and Mr Pickwick* via the story that Dickens was working on prior to *Pickwick*, *The Tuggs's at Ramsgate*. Peter Stadlera has just posted about the town:
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Ramsgate Beach 'where men typically stood with telescopes and opera-glasses, ogling bathers'.

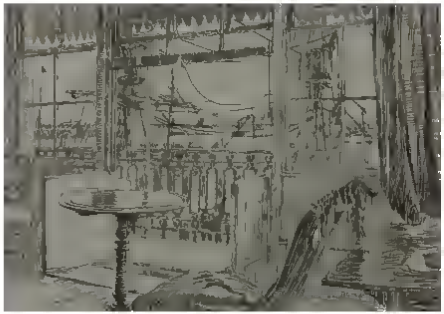
- “Well, Ramsgate is a seaside town in the district of Thanet in east Kent, England.

- "It was one of the great English seaside towns of the 19th century.

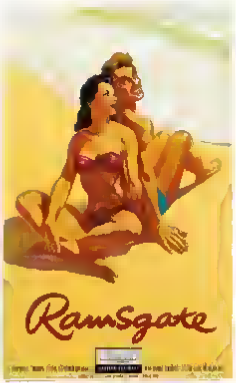
- "As of 2001 it had a population of around 40,000. Ramsgate's main attraction is its coastline, and its main industries are tourism and fishing.

- "The town has one of the largest marinas on the English south coast, and the Port of Ramsgate has provided cross-channel ferries for many years.

- "The artist Vincent Van Gogh moved to Ramsgate in April 1876, at the age of 23. He boarded at 11 Spencer Square, which is identified by a blue plaque. He obtained work as a teacher at a local school in Royal Road. In one of his letters to his brother Theo, he described his surroundings. 'There's a harbour full of all kinds of ships, closed in by stone jetties running into the sea on which one can walk. And further out one sees the sea in its natural state, and that's beautiful.'

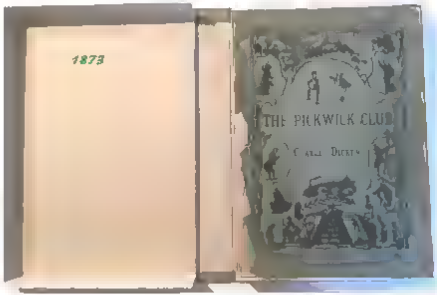


- "I've found an interesting pen-and-ink drawing by James Tissot showing a room overlooking the seaside at Ramsgate. The beach and harbour were popular subjects for 19th-century artists, but Tissot's unusual interior view shows only a glimpse of boats. He uses the linear medium to weave a pattern of masts, architecture and furniture. Resorts like Ramsgate were often settings for modern-life novels and plays such as those of Wilkie Collins. The empty room suggests absence and events past or yet to come. Tissot added figures to the scene in three other versions of this composition."

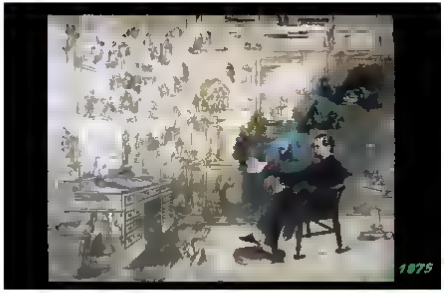

Ramsgate

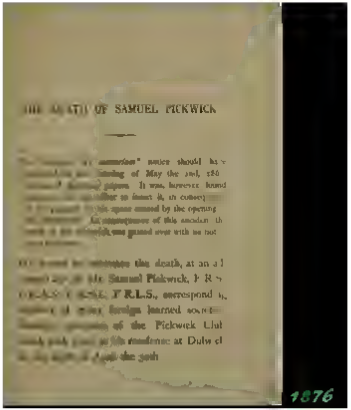
March 23

- Continuing my countdown of 'The *Pickwick* Years', leading into the 180th anniversary on March 31st...


1873
THE PICKWICK CLUB

1874

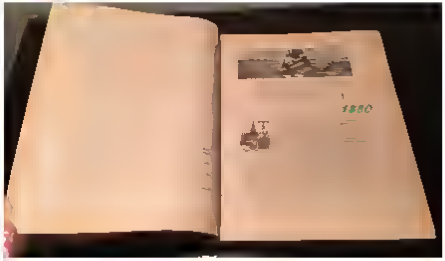

1875

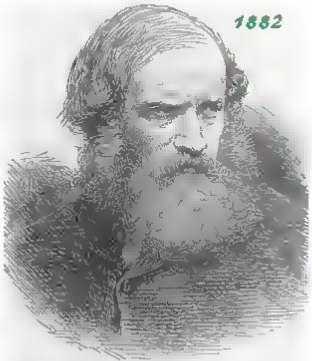

THE DEATH OF SAMUEL PICKWICK
1876

J. J. FOSTER & CO.,
CLOTHIERS AND HATTERS,

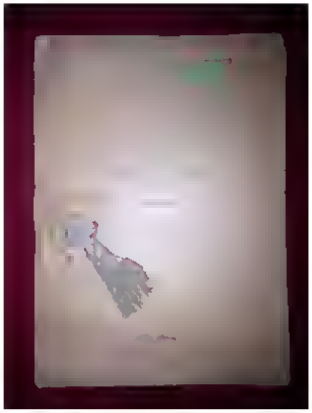
George Cruikshank (1792-1878)
1878

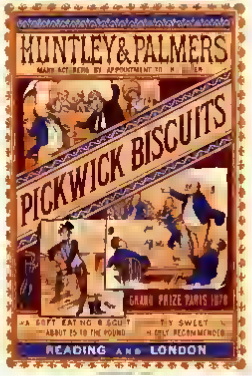
1879


1880



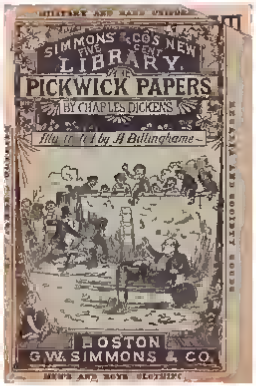
THE LATE MR. HABLOT K BROWNE



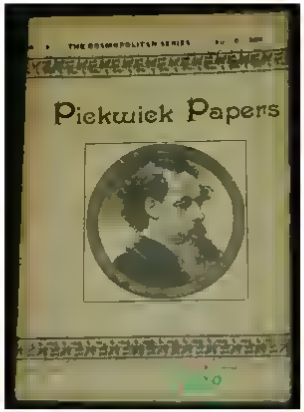

HUNTLEY & PALMERS
PICKWICK BISCUITS
GRAND PRIZE PARIS 1878
READING AND LONDON

1885

1886


SIMMONS & CO'S NEW
FIVE CENT
LIBRARY.
PICKWICK PAPERS
BY CHARLES DICKENS
Illustrated by A Billingsame
BOSTON
G.W. SIMMONS & CO.

1887


THE COSMOPOLITAN SERIES
Pickwick Papers

Pickwick Theatre
GREAT SUMMER NIGHTS RESORT

THE
POSTHUMOUS PAPERS
OF THE
PICKWICK
CLUB

1892

March 23

- Here is another very informative post by Peter Stadlera, which actually points to a minor geographical error I made in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. I have Seymour's son say that he went to the Charing Cross hospital, which was ironically the very place where Mr Pickwick's spectacles came off in the struggle with the cabman. That would have been true with regard to the hospital's Villiers Street address, but by the time of Seymour's son, the hospital had changed location. But I don't think these little errors are a problem - Dickens made similar mistakes in *Pickwick*, and so, as my novel parallels *The Pickwick Papers*, probably a sprinkling of errors should remain.

- Peter Stadlera: "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Charing Cross Hospital. In 1818 Dr. Benjamin Golding established the 'West London Infirmary and Dispensary' at 16 Suffolk Street, behind the Haymarket Theatre. The infirmary had been the dream of Dr. Golding, who wanted to establish a place of healing for the poor. The then Duke of York and Albany was asked to become patron; he accepted, and the hospital was thenceforth known as the Royal West London Infirmary. Following this, the then-Duchess of York and Albany and Duke of Cambridge also became patrons. In 1821, the infirmary was reaching capacity, treating nearly 10,000 patients a year, so a new site was found, at 28 Villiers Street, near Charing Cross in the heart of the metropolis. The infirmary had room for twelve beds. Shortly afterwards, a plan was put in place to establish a medical school alongside the infirmary.

www.alamy.com - CEC90X

- "In 1829, the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School was recognised by the newly founded University of London though the school had been training doctors since 1822. Over the years, the list of benefactors and patrons grew, including many from the Royal Family. In 1827, the name of the Royal West London Infirmary was changed to the more appropriate 'Charing Cross Hospital'. Plans were drawn up by architect Mr Decimus Burton in 1830 and a site was found, just off the Strand. On 15 September 1831 the foundation stone was laid by the Duke of Sussex. The first completed ward was named after the daughter of the Duchess of Kent, Princess Victoria, who eventually became Queen Victoria. The principal ward for men was named Golding Ward, after the founder. The hospital itself was completed in January 1834, at a total cost of £20000, and in October of that year, the 22 medical students were transferred from Villiers Street to the new building [4]. The hospital and medical school continued to expand.

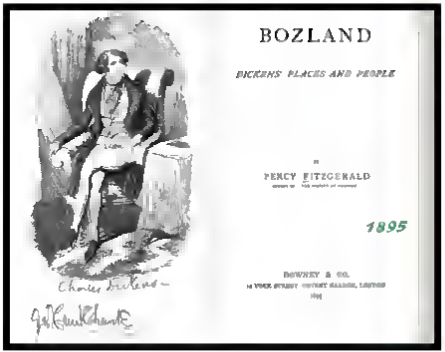
- "When King's College London opened, it needed a medical school and offered Charing Cross a substantial amount of money to train their students. Dr Golding was opposed to the idea and in 1839, after several years of negotiation, King's College decided to set up their own medical school. During those years, the school saw difficult times, and the number of students enrolling plummeted. By 1840, faith in the school had been restored and the number of students increased dramatically, however, Dr Golding suffered a stroke. By 1854 the hospital was flourishing and the top floor, which had been left as an empty shell, was completed. In 1856 Dr Golding retired as Director of Charing Cross Hospital Medical School. The hospital encountered hard times after several new hospitals, with larger medical schools, were established in central London. However, Charing Cross Hospital weathered the storm: in 1866 it had professional nursing staff, and the hospital was enlarged several times over the next few years - in fact, after a major rebuild in 1877 the hospital had doubled in size

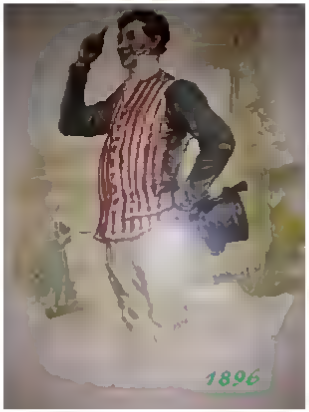
- "Golding died on 21 June 1863 and is buried in Brompton Cemetery, London. Since 31 March 2012, it has become tradition for Imperial College medical students in their final year to visit Golding's tomb on the day of their final year dinner, to honour their teachers and to be inspired to emulate Golding's achievements."

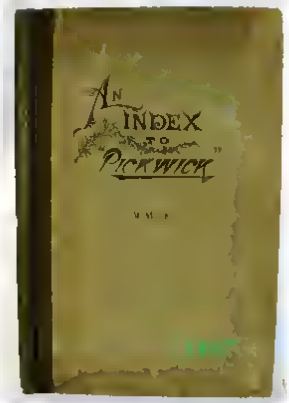
March 24

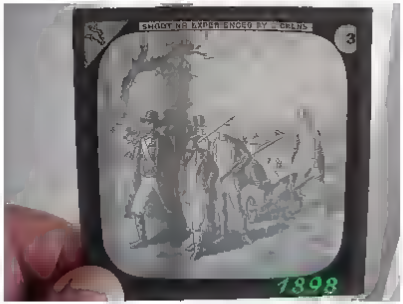
- Day 3 of 'The *Pickwick* Years'.

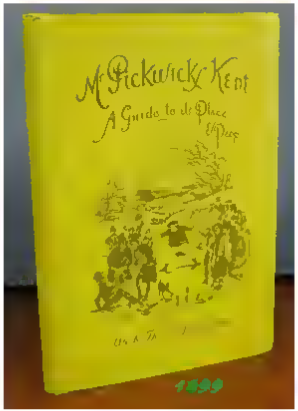
BUT 2 DAYS REMAIN.
1894
The Boy Phenomenon
—AT—
PICKWICK HOTEL
Until Saturday, Feb. 3, 5 p. m.
Hundreds Going to See Him.

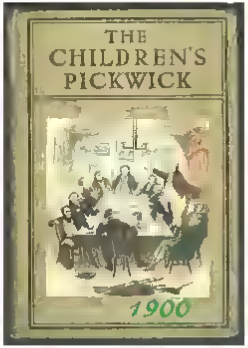

BOZLAND
DICKENS PLACES AND PEOPLE
PERCY FITZGERALD
1895


1896


An
INDEX
TO
"PICKWICK"

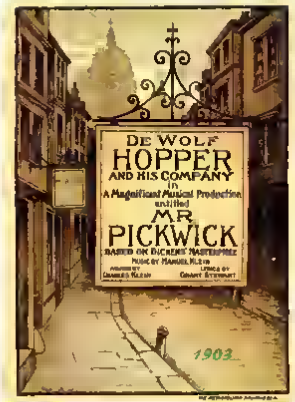

3
1898

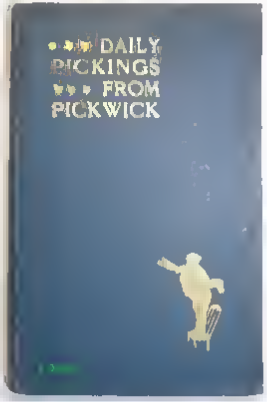

Mr Pickwick's Kent
A Guide to it Place
1898


THE
CHILDREN'S
PICKWICK
1900

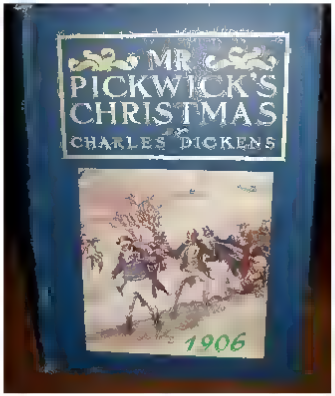
1901
PICKWICK
TEN PINS

Mr. Pickwick


DE WOLF
HOPPER
AND HIS COMPANY
IN
A Magnificent Musical Production
entitled
MR.
PICKWICK
BASED ON DICKENS' MASTERPIECE
1903

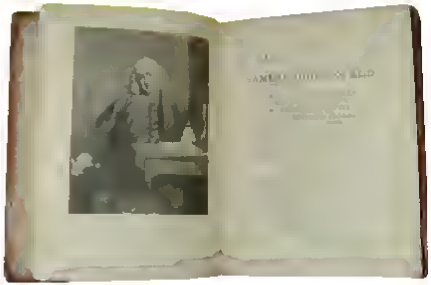

DAILY
PICKINGS
FROM
PICKWICK

1905


MR
PICKWICK'S
CHRISTMAS
CHARLES DICKENS
1906

EXHIBITION

March 24



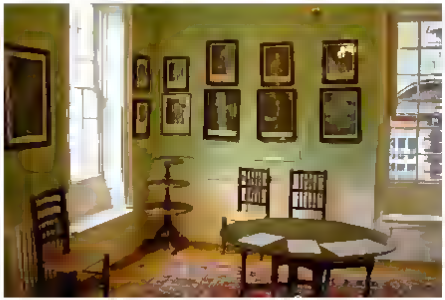
- The great Peter Stadlera now looks at Samuel Johnson. I remember that, during the period when I was working on *Death and Mr Pickwick*, I was reading Johnson's book *Rasselas* when I was travelling on a London tube train. The passenger opposite me noticed the book, and he started a conversation - it turned out that he was a Johnson-enthusiast, and he said that he always turned towards Johnson's dictionary first if he needed to look up a word, and only if the word wasn't in Johnson would he use a modern dictionary!

- Peter Stadlera: "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Samuel Johnson was born in Lichfield, England, on September 18, 1709; his father Michael was a bookseller. Johnson was not a healthy infant, and there was considerable question as to whether he would survive: he was baptized almost immediately. The availability of the books in his father's shop, and his natural proclivity for learning, contributed to his having extensive knowledge at an early age. Johnson had to leave Oxford for financial reasons.

- "In 1735, Johnson married Elizabeth "Tetty" Porter, a woman several years older than him: she was 46, and he 25.

- "As a young man, Johnson tried his hand at a career as a schoolmaster, and was unsuccessful - largely because he didn't have a degree. To some extent, his ungainly appearance, twitches, and mannerisms made it difficult to maintain the respect of his students. He eventually (1737) went to London to seek his fortune, and found employment as a writer for various periodicals. Johnson received a government pension in 1762.In 1763 he met a young Scot named James Boswell in Thomas Davies's bookstore in London. The two became firm friends. Boswell took notes of their conversations, and leveraged those notes and other material into the mammoth, landmark biography *The Life of Samuel Johnson*. (The full title is a bit longer.).

- "Johnson's output included far more than just his output of the 1750's, of course. It also includes a complete edition of Shakespeare; a number of frequently cited political tracts; sermons; a description of his 1773 tour to Scotland with Boswell, with considerable discussion of the change of an era; and a series of biographies of numerous British poets (*The Lives of the Poets*), commissioned to accompany reprints of each poet's works. Johnson died on December 13, 1784. Boswell's biography was published in 1791.



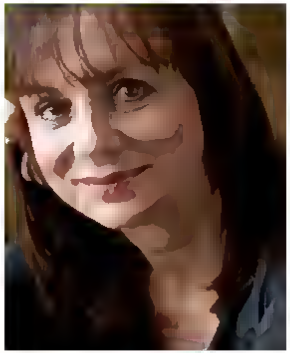
- "In London you have to go to the Dr Johnson House...

- ...and meet Hodge his cat."

March 24

- Alas, *Death and Mr Pickwick* did not make the final six of the Walter Scott Prize, but congratulations to the books that were chosen: http://www.thetimes.co.uk/.../.../uk/scotland/article4719577.ece

March 24



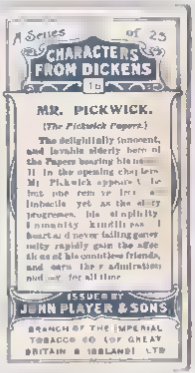
- "A fantastic novel."
- That's how Elizabethan Buchan, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Revenge of the Middle-Aged Woman* has just described *Death and Mr Pickwick* on twitter. She responded to my own tweet announcing that DaMP had not made the shortlist, and said she was very sorry. Do take a look at Elizabeth's website:
- http://elizabethbuchan.com/

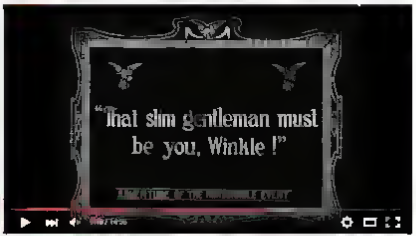
March 25

- Onward with the 180th birthday countdown for Mr Pickwick!

1910
HARBUTT'S
PLASTICINE

1911

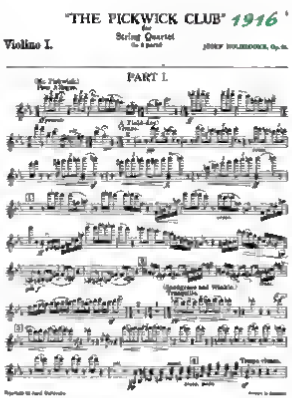


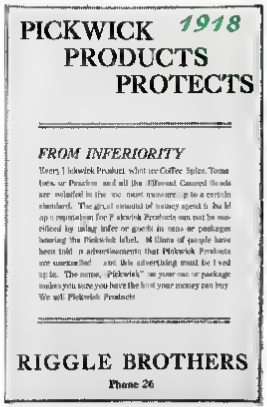


The Pickwick Papers ("The Honourable Event") - *1913*
silent film

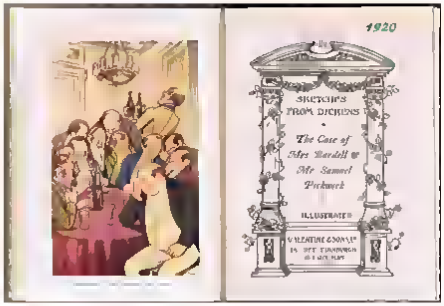
CHRISTMAS EVE
AT DINGLY DELL
1914
DESCRIPTIVE FANTASIA
EZRA READ

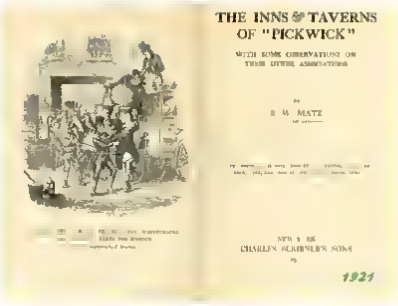
BUCHANAN'S
1915
"BLACK & WHITE" AND "RED SEAL"


'THE PICKWICK CLUB' 1916
for
String Quartet
Violino I.
PART I.


PICKWICK PRODUCTS PROTECTS
1918
FROM INFERIORITY
RIGGLE BROTHERS
Phone 26

Saks
CLOTHES OF CUSTOM QUALITY
FOR YOUNG MEN
HERE'S where we make a hit, as Mr Pickwick said as he slipped on the ice No other store has given Young Men's Clothes the thought we have— and hence, no other store has the Young Men's clientele that we have.
Properly Priced
1919
Saks & Company
BROADWAY AT 33th STREET


1920
SKETCHES
FROM DICKENS
The Case of
Mrs Bardell v
Mr Samuel
Pickwick
ILLUSTRATED


THE INNS & TAVERNS
OF "PICKWICK"
WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS ON
THEIR LITERL ASSOCIATIONS
B W MATZ
1921

Just unpacked this week--

Five new styles of dainty 'Jiffion' aprons

1922

and what charming Christmas gifts they'll make.

Pickwick cloth, gingham-and-other washable materials attractively trimmed with motifs, appliques, pipings and insets of gay materials or contrasts.

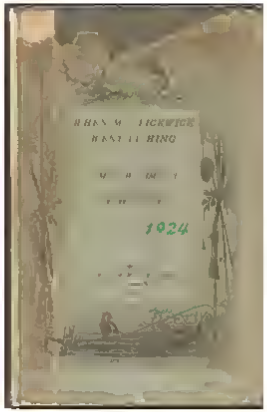
So smart and artistic, and in such pretty color schemes.

Criss-cross straps slip them "on in a jiffy and off in a jiffy." No buttons, hooks or clasps.

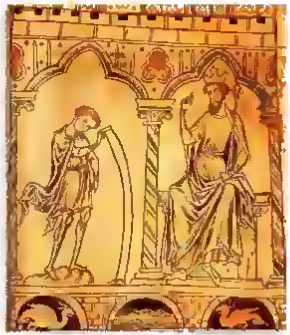
All sizes & colors

$1 and $1.95

—2nd floor

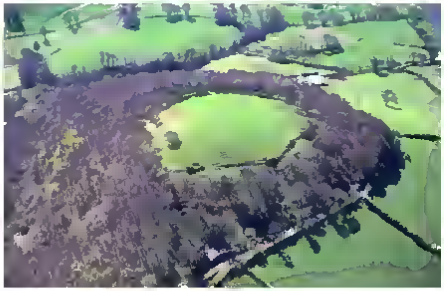

1924

March 25



- Peter Stadlera now looks at the ancient British leader Vortigern, who is mentioned towards the end of *Death and Mr Pickwick*, when the mad sailor is beside a standing stone. When I namedropped Vortigern, I wanted to suggest that he represented a culture in which the English language was not spoken - and if his reign had continued, *The Pickwick Papers* as we know it would not have existed, because the novel is tied up with the English language, and English speech, as emphasised by the swapping of the letters V and W, and it is doubtful that this could find an equivalent in Welsh. I also find Vortigern a fascinating figure. When I was looking at Peter's post, he mentions that Vortigern's name was written as Wyrtgeorn by later Anglo-Saxons, and it strikes me that this could be a deliberate piece of wordplay, since it could be thought of as meaning "root yearn" or "plant yearn" (from Old English wyrt, meaning "wort", "root" or "plant", and "georn" meaning "yearn".) And what could be more appropriate for Vortigern - a man whose dynasty was uprooted.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we meet Vortigern and ask ourself who this legendary man was. The name, which has been anglicized as Vortigern, appears in the oldest Welsh records as Guorthigirn and later as Gwrtheyrn. Bede, writing in Latin, uses the very early forms Vertigernus and Uurtigernus; in the later Anglo-Saxon transmission these are rendered as Wyrtgeorn. The meaning is explained as 'High Lord' or 'Overlord'. Tigern does not quite have the meaning of 'King', which is usually represented in names with the form 'Rex', as in Rī(othamus) or (Vortime)Rix, though a more loose translation with 'King' may not be totally incorrect. Incorrect would be a translation of 'Vortigern' as 'High King'.



- "Vortigern is mentioned in two entries of the Anglo Saxon Chronicle: AD 449 and AD 455. Much is taken from Bede, which accounts for the traditional dating. For the year 449 it mentions the Adventus Saxonum, with Vortigern as 'king of the Britons' inviting the brothers Hengist and Horsa. Significantly, in the same year there is a second invitation to the Angles. For the year 455 the chronicle mentions a great battle between the Saxons and the Britons under Vortigern, the Saxons are victorious and no more is heard of Vortigern or his sons. Modern writers have tended to treat Vortigern as a shadowy or semi mythical character and try to eliminate him as far as possible from the history of the early fifth century. In any case he had power over a wide area, from Kent to Wales. He might have held the former Roman province of Britannia Prima, but his power evidently went beyond that at some stage in his life. As a large landholder, he probably owned personally the territory of Gwrtheyrnion, which had probably been an imperial estate. Genealogies also claim his overlordship over southern Wales, explained through his wife Sevira, whose father Magnus Maximus had supposedly married into the local dynasty. So it could be argued that Vortigern was the natural inheritor of Maximus claim to Britain in general and large parts of Wales in particular.. Historians can't tell for sure who he was

- "But he's a fascinating character of historical and legendary stories. Vortigern was recently portrayed by the Dutch actor Rutger Hauer in a fantasy re-telling of the Arthurian legend. According to the History Channel, there is an historical record of an overlord called Vortigern, who lived in the 5th Century. He was a corrupt leader who contracted out the defence of Britain from the Picts and the Scots to Saxon mercenaries living across the English channel. In exchange for their services, he gave the Saxons grain tributes and prime lands that had been occupied by Briton lords. Eventually, he could not reconcile the competing demands of the Saxons with those of the other Britons, and the Saxons killed him when he refused to pay the tribute owed.
- Some scholars believe that the ruins of an ancient fort in modern-day Wales are the remnants of Vortigern's primary base. It overlooks the river Teifi, an area which Welsh historical sources connect to Vortigern."

March 26

- 'The *Pickwick* Years' continue....*The Dry Pickwick* which you will see in this batch was a story by the humorist Stephen Leacock which imagined that the forces of prohibition in the USA had led to a version of *The Pickwick Papers* in which all the episodes featuring alcohol were removed. (I think probably a book the size of a pamphlet would be left...) And the book *'Mr Pickwick's Second Time on Earth* imagined Mr Pickwick time-travelling to the twentieth century.
- You will also notice that the 1936 Pickwick Exhibition was arranged by "W.Miller". Miller is my 'prime suspect' for the person who acquired the material about Seymour which mysteriously vanished in the 1920s.

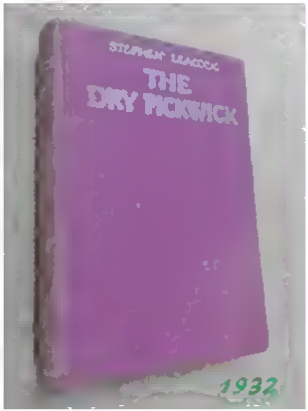
MR PICKWICK'S SECOND
TIME ON EARTH
1927

1928

1930

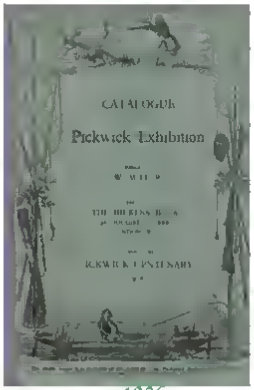
CATHOK BOTTLE LIVES IN THE "PICKWICK PAPERS

the jeroboam Tracy Twyman fled 14 hide his sorrows. The Dickens many pictures and other items associated with the famous novelist.

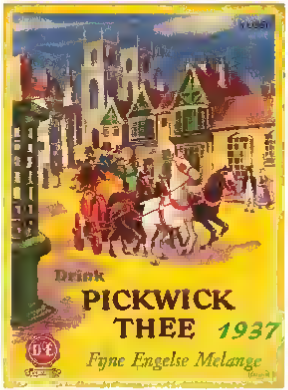


1933

1935



1936


Drink
PICKWICK
THEE 1937
Fijne Engelse Melange

1938
Merrie Christmas

March 26

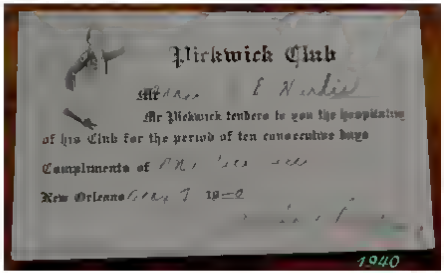
- Peter Stadlera now visits the village of Shorne, which appears near the end of *Death and Mr Pickwick*. In the post, Peter mentions Dickens's awareness of Shorne, and it has indeed been suggested that Shorne's churchyard was the 'original' of a churchyard mentioned in *The Pickwick Papers*. This link with Dickens was important to me when I came to choose Shorne as a location for the tale of the mad sailor, because I wanted to suggest that Dickens could have plausibly written the tale.

- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Shorne churchyard. Shorne is a village and civil parish in the Gravesham District of Kent, England. The parish is three miles (4.8 km) to the east of Gravesend. Most of the land is well-drained but its marshes, the Shorne Marshes, reach down to the Thames Estuary and are an SSSI (Site of Special Interest) amid the North Kent Marshes on the Hoo Peninsula proper. Cobham Hall and Darnley Mausoleum (we already had posts about those locations) are about 2 miles to the south. In the vicinity of Cobham Woods is the idyllic village of Shorne, dominated by the tower of a Saxon church.

- "Dickens had pondered being buried here, in the peaceful churchyard, or in Cobham or Rochester, near the cathedral that he features so prominently in the action of his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood.*"

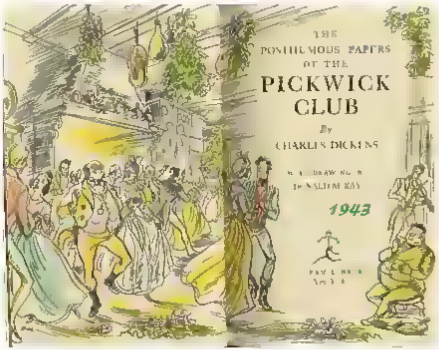
March 27

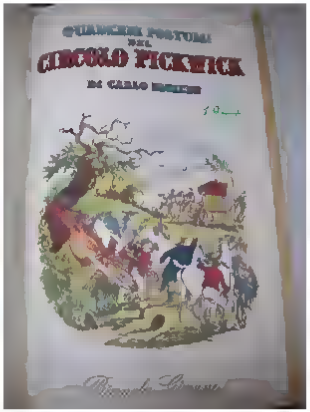
- Continuing the countdown of 'The *Pickwick* Years', to celebrate the 180th anniversary of *The Pickwick Papers*...

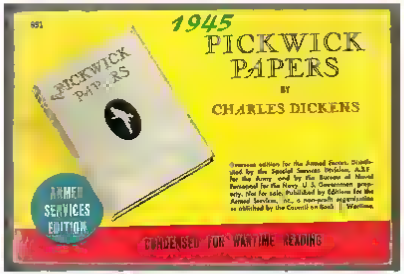

Pickwick Club
Mr Pickwick tenders to you the hospitality
of his Club for the period of ten consecutive days
Compliments of
New Orleans
1940

1941

1942


THE
POSTHUMOUS PAPERS
OF THE
PICKWICK
CLUB
By
CHARLES DICKENS
1943


CIRCOLO PICKWICK


1945
PICKWICK PAPERS
BY
CHARLES DICKENS
ARMED SERVICES EDITION
CONDENSED FOR WARTIME READING

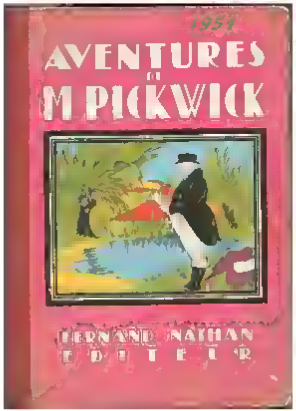
1946

1947

1948

1949

BELOVED, BE FAITHFUL
JOE LOSS
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
1950
1/-


1951
AVENTURES
DE
M PICKWICK
FERNAND NATHAN
EDITEUR

- You'll notice here the poster for the 1952 *Pickwick Papers* movie. The star of this, James Hayter, went on to become the voiceover artist responsible for the well-known series of ads "Mr Kipling makes exceedingly good cakes".

Pickwick
HOTEL
1953
Pickwick
HOTEL

RADIO TIMES
1954

March 27

- Easter greetings from Sir Pelzi, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* cat! (Playing the role of an Easter bunny!)

March 27

- Here is Peter Stadlera on an artist who is mentioned in *Deoth ond Mr Pickwick*, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Towards the end of the novel, Seymour's son says: "Sometimes I think my father didn't really want to be a caricaturist at all. I suspect he always wanted to be a distinguished painter like Joshua Reynolds." I have a vague recollection that I was told something similar by the son of Ged Melling - the manic-depressive modern-day cartoonist upon whom my portrayal of Seymour was partly based - and I then applied the comment to Seymour.

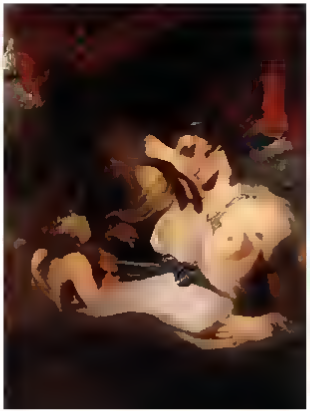
- Peter Stadlera: "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about the Portrait of Joshua Reynolds. Well, let's have a closer look at it.
- Joshua Reynolds was born in the town of Plympton (now a suburb of the city of Plymouth), on 16 July 1723. He was the youngest of seven sons born to the Reverend Samuel Reynolds, a local Grammar School master, and his wife Theophilia. Reynolds' talent as an artist was clear from an early age and he went on to become one of Britain's finest and most fashionable portrait painters - mixing with some of the 18th century's best-known celebrities, enjoying the patronage of some of the South West's most wealthy landowning families and becoming the founding President of the famous London arts institute, the Royal Academy.

- "By the 1760s, Reynolds was very much a part of London society and had made the acquaintance of powerful families, leading thinkers, actors and politicians. He was active in the Society of Artists when it was created in 1759, drafting their policy documents and submitting his work to their annual shows. By 1768 he was a Director, but quarrels amongst the artists had caused great divisions and the Society disbanded. The Royal Academy as we know it today was created by King George III later that year. Reynolds had not previously enjoyed a good relationship with the monarch, having been passed over in favour of Allan Ramsay for the position of Painter to the King in 1761. However, once he realised the King was serious about granting licence to create the Academy and make him President, he returned from where he was staying in France. He was elected on 14 December 1768.

- "The Academy's aim was (and still is) 'to promote the arts of design'. It was an art school, an exhibition venue and a lobbying body for British artists. Reynolds was truly dedicated to the cause of British art and combined his painting with running the Academy for some 20 years, helping to develop its theories and becoming its chief spokesperson. The annual discourses that he gave to students were eventually published and remain with us today as some of the earliest formal art lessons in England. He recognised the power of the printed press and frequently appeared in their gossip columns. The printing of images enabled him to reach newer, broader audiences and he worked with the best engravers to produce over 400 'official' prints in his lifetime.

- "He chose his friends tactically too, making the most of the new social mobility that the intellectual societies and clubs of his day offered. He established his own 'Literary Club' in 1764 which had poets, writers and actors amongst its members and his mansion in the popular area of Leicester Fields (today's Leicester Square) became a centre for London's intellectual and social circles. Besides his club friends, he also sought out commissions from notable politicians, philosophers and powerful families. Reynolds' combination of well-known, popular subjects, classical symbols and styles and speedy, cheap reproductions was a winning formula which helped to boost his own fame just as much as the celebrity status of the people he painted. In 1769 he was knighted and in 1784 he finally succeeded where he had previously failed and took over from Allan Ramsay as Painter to the King.

- “He continued to paint until 1789, ceasing to work after this due to failing eyesight. He died in London on 23 February 1792. His body lay in state for a day at Somerset House. The funeral took place at St Paul's Cathedral. At the time of his passing he was England's foremost portrait painter having painted, according to estimates, more than 2,000 portraits during his lifetime. I've selected the picture of Mrs Hale...



- "...and Cupid Untying the Zone of Venus.

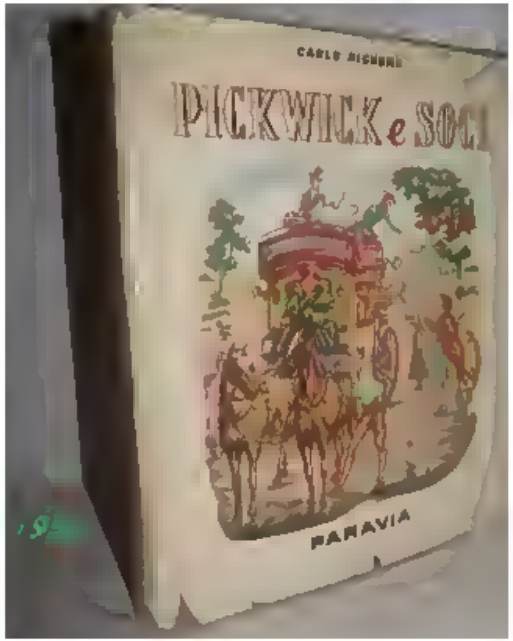
- “A few years later, in 1813, a grand memorial by sculptor John Flaxman was erected in St Paul's and a huge exhibition of his work was held at the British Institution.”

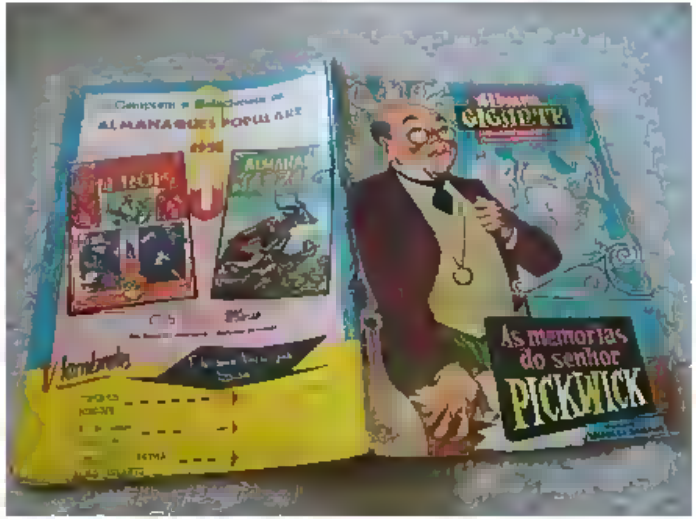
March 27

- Dory, the official *Death and Mr Pickwick* parrot, wishes us a Happy Easter too.

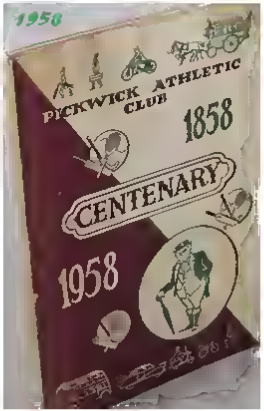
March 28

- Getting closer to Mr Pickwick's 180th birthday on March 31...
- Two things are worthy of special note in today's part of the countdown. First, the image for 1957 shows a comic book version of *The Pickwick Papers* which I came across very recently. I had thought that only one comic book treatment of *Pickwick* existed - a Spanish version - but this is different, with a different artist, and was published in Brazil, in Portuguese. (But so far, I haven't seen an English-language comic strip treatment of *Pickwick*.)
- Second, take a look at a very young Ian McKellen in the picture for 1961.
- The countdown will continue tomorrow...


CARLO DICKENS
PICKWICK e SOCI
PARAVIA

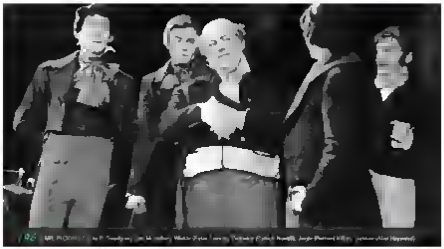

ALMANAQUE POPULAR
ALMANA
As memorias do senhor PICKWICK

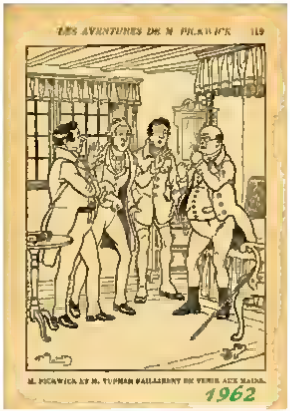
1957


1958
PICKWICK ATHLETIC CLUB
1858
CENTENARY
1958

1959
Smirnoff
VODKA

Towcester The Pickwick Restaurant *1960*




LES AVENTURES DE M. PICKWICK
M. PICKWICK AU M. TUPMAN PAILLARDENT DE VENIR AUX MAINS.
1962

IF I RULED THE WORLD
1963
HARRY SECOMBE
"PICKWICK"
SEAN KENNY
PETER COE
WOLF MANKOWITZ
CYRIL ORNADEL
LESLIE BRICUSSE

YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH
1964
THE PICKWICKS
EDWARD KASSNER MUSIC CO. LTD
2/6

1965

MR. PICKWICK

PICKWICK KENNEL DOOR
Modern — 2 Piece — 4 Hinged
Cast Aluminum Frame — Plexiglass Panel
Low Maintenance — Lifetime Materials Eliminates
DRAFTS — DUST — ROTENTS — INSECTS
4 Sizes—SMLR & up—Dealer Inquiries Invited
For complete details write
Pickwick Mfg at 42nd St., Augusta, Mich 49012
Phone 616—731-4799
1967

March 28

- In *Death and Mr Pickwick*, I mention the mud of St George's Fields, in London. But Peter Stadlera has found that there is a lot of history in that mud...
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about St. George's Field - and I have come across a 'massacre' of old in my research.

- "The Massacre of St George's Fields occurred on 10 May 1768 when government soldiers opened fire on demonstrators that had gathered at St George's Fields, Southwark in south London. The protest was against the imprisonment of the radical Member of Parliament John Wilkes for writing an article that severely criticised King George III. As many as 15,000 people gathered near the prison. They began chanting 'Wilkes and Liberty', 'No Liberty, No King', and 'Damn the King! Damn the Government! Damn the Justices!' outside the prison. After the reading of the Riot Act telling the crowds to disperse within the hour, six or seven people were killed when fired on by troops.

- "The Irish playwright and government supporter Hugh Kelly made a defence of the government's right to use force against Wilkes' supporters. In 1770 Wilkes' supporters started a riot at the production of Kelly's new play *A Word to the Wise* at the Drury Lane Theatre forcing the abandonment of the production.

- "On his release from prison in March 1770, Wilkes was appointed a sheriff in London. In 1774 he became Lord Mayor of London."

March 29

1968

- The countdown of 'The *Pickwick* Years' now reaches the late 1960s, and goes on into the mid-1980s. I wanted to included a sprinkling of things in the countdown relating to *Death and Mr Pickwick*, rather than *The Pickwick Papers*, and so in this batch you will see the first of several images relating to the pop music mentioned in my novel.

1812/1870
Charles Dickens
1970

CHRISTMAS 1971

1971

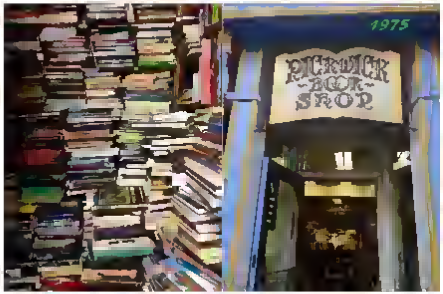
First day cover
Christmas
1972

FIRST DAY
OF ISSUE

1972

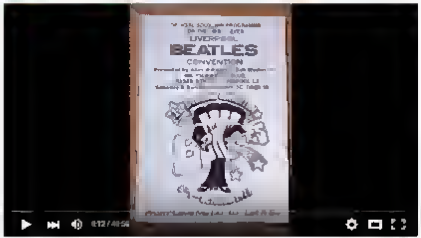
Bryan Ferry
• A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall
1973

1974

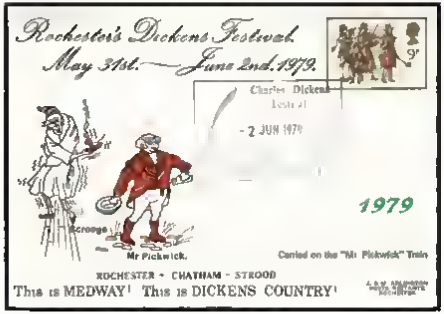

1975
MURDER
-BOOK-
SHOP

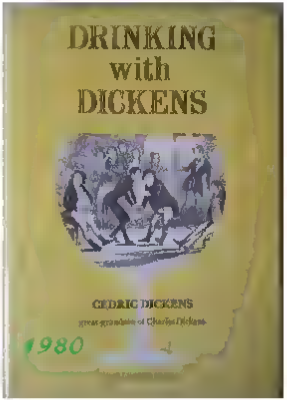
1976

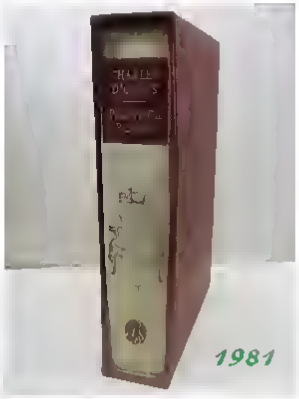
1977



Liverpool's First Beatles Convention Mr Pickwicks Club


Rochester's Dickens Festival
May 31st — June 2nd. 1979.
9p
Charles Dickens
- 2 JUN 1979
1979
Scrooge
Mr Pickwick.
Carried on the "Mr Pickwick" Train
ROCHESTER · CHATHAM · STROOD
This is MEDWAY! This is DICKENS COUNTRY!

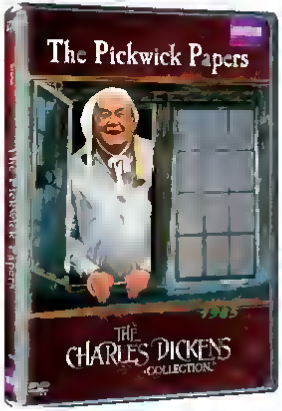

DRINKING
with
DICKENS
CEDRIC DICKENS
1980


1981

PICKWICK
1982

1983

JIM BEAM
1984

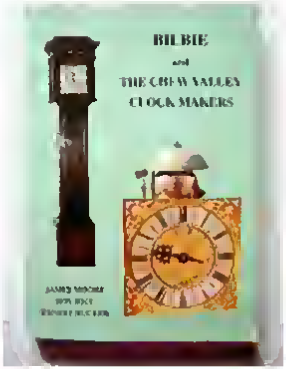

The Pickwick Papers
1985
THE CHARLES DICKENS COLLECTION

1986

March 29

- In order to create a sense of "life" in a novel, I think it is very important to pay great attention to details. So, when I described the last days of Moses Pickwick, as he sat in a chair staring at a clock, I didn't merely say "a clock" - I gave the clockmaker's name, which Moses would have seen on the dial. In his latest post, Peter Stadlera gives us additional information about that clockmaker.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about William Townley of Temple Cloud. I've found a rare, early hooded wall alarm clock made by this clockmaker.

- "The clock features: a 7" brass dial with silvered chapter ring and central alarm disc; a well-engraved dial centre and the original blued steel single hand; the original oak case with fine iron work fixings; a verge escapement, single weight driven mechanism which is made as an integral part of the case; a slide-off top with two iron strips to hold the alarm hammer in place.

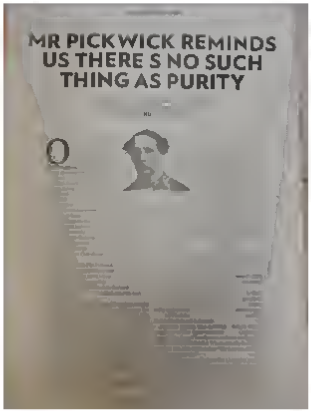


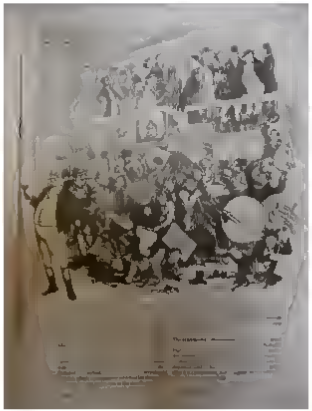
- "William Townley of Temple Cloud is recorded in *The Chew Valley Clockmakers* book as working from 1700-1732.

- "Temple Cloud is a village within the Chew Valley in Somerset in the Bath and North East Somerset Council area on the A37 road. It is located 10 miles from Bristol and Bath, very close to Clutton."

March 29

- The latest *Big Issue* magazine has a double-page article about *Death and Mr Pickwick*, by John Stafford Ricketts, who describes the book as "a brilliant detective story" and "a great novel". (You will probably have to zoom and scroll to read the text.) *The Big Issue* is always a fine read, and covers a tremendous range of material, and this article follows on from one about Dickens by the *Big Issue*'s founder, Lord John Bird, which appeared at the end of 2015, in which Lord Bird named *Death and Mr Pickwick* as his book of the year.

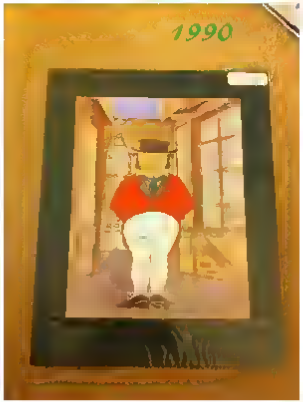

MR PICKWICK REMINDS
US THERE S NO SUCH
THING AS PURITY

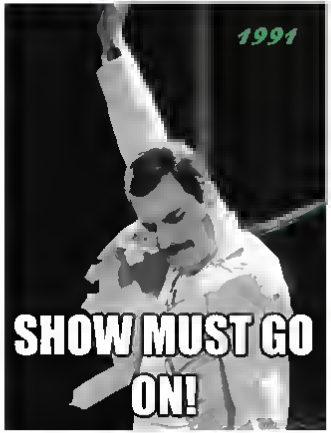


March 30

- And so we reach the penultimate set of images in the countdown of 'The *Pickwick* Years'.

1989


1990



- As was the case with yesterday's batch, you will notice a couple of images which relate to *Death and Mr Pickwick*, rather than *The Pickwick Papers*.
-
£10
BANK of ENGLAND
£10
TEN
POUNDS
1993

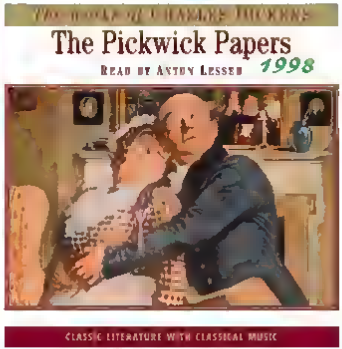
1994

1995
The
'PICKWICK EXPRESS'
Service X79
Service X80
Service X81
LIMITED STOP SERVICES BETWEEN
THANET AND CANTERBURY
Stagecoach
EAST KENT

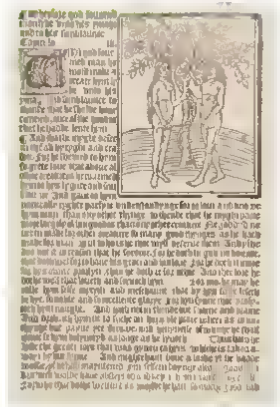
1996
HARRY SECOMBE
STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM
PICKWICK

BOB DYLAN
NOT DARK YET
1997

CLASSIC FICTION

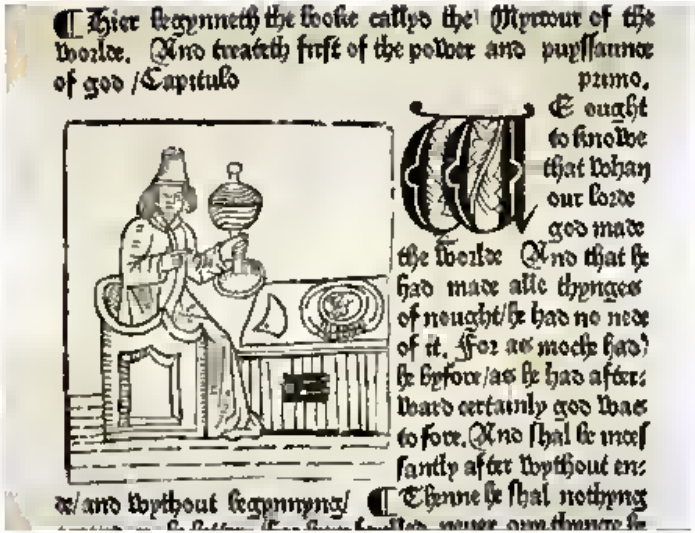

The Pickwick Papers
Read by Anton Lesser
1998
CLASSIC LITERATURE WITH CLASSICAL MUSIC

March 30



- *The Pickwick Papers* of course was an illustrated book, and in *Death and Mr Pickwick*, I wanted to include some reference to the beginnings of the practice of illustrating books. This takes us back to Caxton, the subject of today's post by Peter Stadlera.
- "In *Death and Mr Pickwick* we read about Caxton's *The Mirraur af the Warlde*. *The Mirraur af the Warlde* is the first illustrated book, the first science book, and the first encyclopaedia printed in England. In the introduction, William Caxton tells his readers that he translated it from French between January 2 and March 8, 1481, at the request of a fellow member of the Mercers Company who wished to present it to Lord William Hastings, Lord Chamberlain to Edward IV. The Latin original was translated into French meter in 1245-6 for the Duke of Berry.

- "Caxton worked from a prose manuscript entitled *Imoge du Monde* that was authored (or scribed) in 1464 by Gossouin of Metz. The text summarizes the knowledge of the times at a level of detail that would interest and inform the reading public without belaboringly excessive details and scholastic argumentation. The book was popular; Caxton published it a second time in about 1490.



¶ Hier begynneth the booke called the Myrrour of the worlde. And treateth first of the power and puyssaunce of god /Capitulo primo.

¶ Ought to knowe that whan our lorde god made the worlde And that he had made alle thynges of nought/he had no nede of it. For as moche had he byfore/as he had after: ward certainly god was to fore. And shal be mest saufly after wythout en: de/and wythout begynnyng/ ¶ Thenne he shal nothyng

- "*Image du monde* is the work of a well-read scholar who drew from many sources. It offers a brief geographical description of the world and a compendium of scientific knowledge, including cosmography, geology, hydrology, meteorology, geometry, astronomy, 'where hell is set and what it is,' and 'why money is made' (i.e., economics), among other topics. Caxton faithfully and accurately translated the manuscript, except for a few patriotic revisions such as the addition of Oxford and Cambridge to Paris as seats of learning and the deletion of the assertion that Englishmen have tails.

- "The third edition selectively adds more information: for example, a (garbled) explanation of how to take the square root of a number and the first description in English of the techniques the ancients used to enhance memory. Caxton's illustrations were based on those in the manuscript he used. The blocks were likely the work of an English woodcutter – better quality would have been expected if they were imported. The third edition of the *Mirrour* is nearly as rare and more extensively illustrated than the Caxton editions, with nearly 100 woodcuts up to full-page in size that come from many sources (not Caxton's originals). Illustrations demonstrate gravity on a spherical Earth and the shadows cast by eclipses; they also depict the dragons and unicorns in India and the world's four major rivers flowing out of the Garden of Eden.

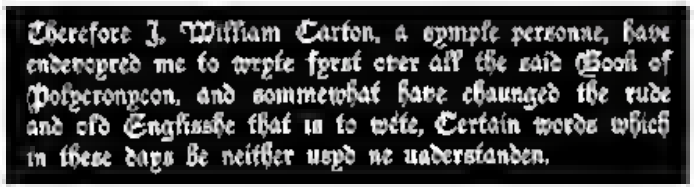
- "As a collector of stamps I've found British stamps on Caxton.
- William Caxton, the first English printer, was born in the Weald of Kent. In 1438, he became apprenticed to Robert Large, a leading textile merchant who became the mayor of London the following year. After Large's death in 1441, Caxton moved to Bruges, the foremost center for trade between the English and the Flemish, and built up a thriving textile business. He attained such prominence as a merchant that by 1463 he was acting governor of the Merchant Adventurers in the Low Countries. In 1464, he attempted unsuccessfully to renew a wool treaty with Phillip, Duke of Burgundy.

- "Four years later, Caxton successfully completed the trade negotiations with Charles the Bold, Phillip's successor. Shortly thereafter, Caxton was hired as an advisor to Charles' new duchess, the former Princess Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV. It was at the request of the duchess Margaret that he resumed his abandoned translation of a popular French romance, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* from the French of Raoul le Fèvre.

- "After spending a year in Cologne learning the art of printing, Caxton returned to Bruges and set up a printing press, where he published his translation of *The Recuyell*, the first printed book in the English language, around 1474. His next publication, *The Game and Play of Chess Moralised* (1474), was a translation of the first major European work on chess, and was the first printed book in English to make extensive use of woodcuts. In 1476, he returned to England and set up a printing shop at Westminster at the sign of the Red Pale. Here, Caxton published such major works as *Troilus and Creseide*, *Morte d'Arthur*, *The History of Reynart the Foxe*, and *The Canterbury Tales*.

On the cover of the brochure for the State Library of Victoria exhibition, 'Mirror of the World: books and ideas' which opened in December 2010, the printer's device of William Caxton appears flanked by rainbow paperbacks.

- "Over the course of 14 years, he printed more than 70 books, 20 of them his own translations from the Latin, French, and Dutch.


Therefore I. William Caxton, a symple personne, have endeuored me to wryte fyrst ouer all the said Book of Polycronycon, and sommewhat have chaunged the rude and old Englisshe that is to wete, Certain wordes which in these days be neither used ne understanden.

- "The typefaces used by Caxton were all varieties of 'black letter' or 'gothic' type. His earlier works were set in an early form of French lettre bâtarde.

- "By 1490, he had acquired a more round and open typeface, a textura originally used by the Parisian printer Antoine Verard and later favored by Caxton's successor, Wynkyn de Worde."

March 31

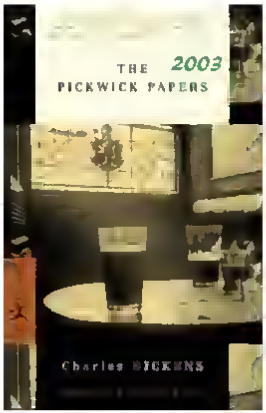
Clive Francis as Mr. Pickwick
BBC Radio 1999

- And so we come to the big day - March 31, 2016, the 180th anniversary of *The Pickwick Papers*.
- Here is the last set of images for 'The *Pickwick* Years'.
- (Note that, for 2001, there is an image relating to the episode of *Desert Island Discs* which started my interest in *Pickwick*.)

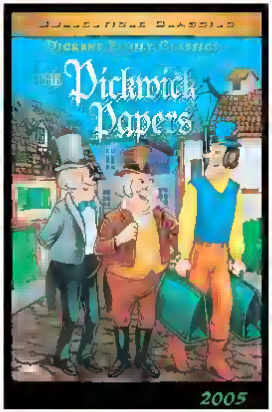
2000
PICKWICKS

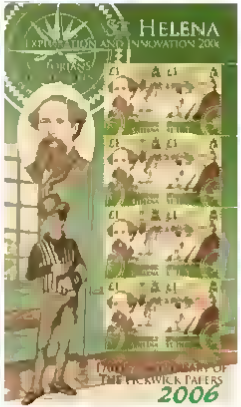
DESERT ISLAND DISCS
2001

PICKWICK'S
2002

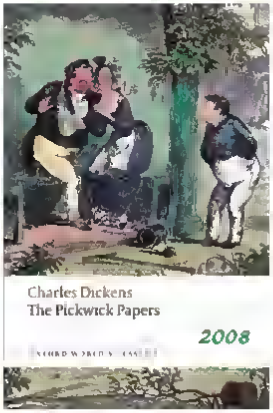

THE 2003
PICKWICK PAPERS
Charles DICKENS

The Pickwick Society
Tea Room Gifts & Antiques
2004


The Pickwick Papers
2005


HELENA
EXPLORATION AND INNOVATION 2006
2006

2007

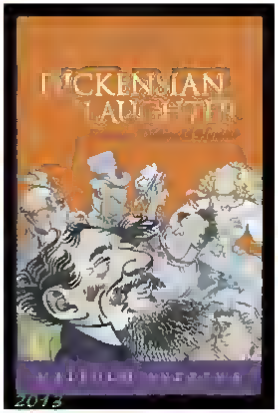

Charles Dickens
The Pickwick Papers
2008

Pickwick's Progress
A Centenary History of the City Pickwick Club
2009
Ina Taylor

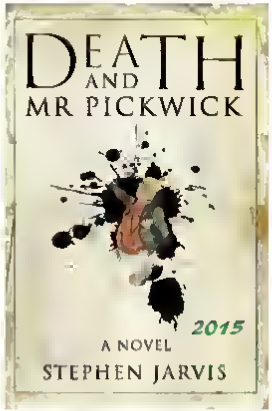
2010
PICK WICK

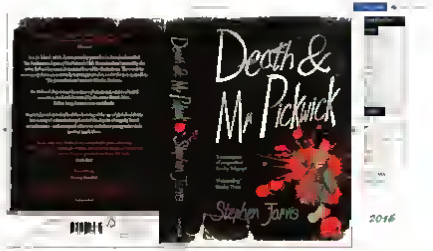
2011
Fish & Chips
Fish & Chips

1st
MR PICKWICK
2012


2013

PERSHORE OPERATIC & DRAMATIC SOCIETY'S
25TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY
PRODUCTION OF
8
2014
PICKWICK
2ND - 7TH
JUNE 2014


DEATH
AND
MR PICKWICK
2015
A NOVEL
STEPHEN JARVIS



- The last image, for 2016, shows the draft cover for the UK paperback edition of *Death and Mr Pickwick*. There are one or two errors on the cover which will be corrected when the paperback is published - note, in particular, if you zoom, the word 'ruse' in the first quote, which should be 'rude' - and so this image, in this form, makes its first and last appearance today, here on facebook. The paperback will be launched on May 12th in the UK, with the American edition (bearing a different cover) being published a month later.
- In my view, *The Pickwick Papers* is not just a great novel, it also has the greatest backstory of any work of literature. The backstory cried out to be turned into a novel itself, and so that's what I attempted to do, in *Death and Mr Pickwick*. I think few novels could generate another novel in this way: it is another piece of evidence that *The Pickwick Papers* is special.
- Happy birthday, Mr Pickwick!